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John Jenkins

THE

# RISE AND PROGRESS

OF

# DISSENT IN BRISTOL;

CHIEFLY IN RELATION TO THE

## BROADMEAD CHURCH:

WITH BRIEF ACCOUNTS OF

THE CHURCH MEETING IN KING STREET, AND OF THE COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS.

INCLUDING

NOTICES OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF CASTLE GREEN, BRIDGE STREET, AND LEWIN'S MEAD.

BY J. G. FULLER.

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# PREFACE.

THE present publication originated in a request made to the Writer, several years ago, to reprint a paper compiled by Dr. Ryland, entitled "EBENEZER," containing the names of the Broadmead Ministers, with the dates of their respective services and removals, and a few occasional references to "Palmer's Nonconformist's Memorial." These references naturally suggested an enlargement, by the collection of such biographical notices as had already appeared in print; and the desire of improvement and its accomplishment have been gradually extending, until, at length, the present volume is the result. Its compilation (which was commenced long before the projection of another work, in relation to Broadmead, which, had it been executed, would have been sufficiently peculiar to have precluded all idea of rivalry,) has involved many difficulties, much regret, and some satisfaction; and it now devolves on the Writer to record his grateful "EBENEZER."

That he should enumerate all the friends to whom he has been indebted for valuable assistance, in the loan of eleven manuscripts and several very scarce publications, will not be expected; to all, specified or not, he tenders his most grateful acknowledgements. But there is one gentleman to whom he has been laid under *special* obligation—Mr. S. J. Button, of London—for the loan of the Manuscript compiled, many years ago, by his respected friend, Mr. Isaac James,*

* That an historian so eminently qualified as Mr. James unquestionably was, by unwearied industry, minute accuracy, and the passion for research, should not have received sufficient encouragement to induce him to publish the interesting details himself, as he proposed, reflects no credit on the public spirit of the Bristol Dissenters of former years. A few worthy patrons undoubtedly there were; but they *were* few, and he felt the general apathy. On being asked, by a friend, why he did not venture on the publication,—with unusual gravity, and more of the melancholy of conscious neglect than of the bitterness of merited satire, he replied, "*I am prepared to fly my kite, whenever my friends will raise the wind!*" After his decease, the present Compiler proposed to undertake the responsibility, if Mr. Hall would write an Introduction—a moiety of the proceeds being assigned to the esteemed widow. Mr. Hall, with his characteristic urbanity, immediately expressed his concurrence, with a view, as he said, of wiping off the disgrace from Broadmead. Alas! though "the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak." The "purpose was broken" by death.

Three or four days before Mr. James's decease, the Writer had the mournful satisfaction of remaining with him through the night. Constant restlessness rendered conversation difficult; but the few sentences he uttered were expressive of deep humility, and "good hope through grace." He died on the 28th of December, 1828; having been a member of the Broadmead church nearly forty years, and many years a Classical Tutor in the Academy of the Bristol Education Society.

—a document of decidedly greater utility than the Broadmead Records themselves; comprising, as it does, every thing they contain of *public* interest, with much additional information, derived from sources not generally accessible.

The Writer regrets that this invaluable manuscript did not come under his notice until after three sheets had been printed: but, by retracing the period of Mr. Hardcastle's ministry, and inserting in an Appendix a few isolated extracts of an earlier date, he has, not unsatisfactorily to himself, supplied the principal omissions.

His acknowledgements are due, for information relative to KING STREET, to his friends Mr. G. C. Ashmead and C. J. Whittuck, Esq.; and for miscellaneous aid, to Mr. Tyson, Editor of the Bristol Memorialist, and Mr. Kerslake, Bookseller, Park-street. The elaborate productions of Besse, Sewell, and Gough, from whose narratives the account of the sufferings of THE FRIENDS has chiefly been derived, were kindly procured for his use from the library of the Friends' Meeting-house, in Rosemary-street.

The Writer considers it due to the congregation meeting in CASTLE GREEN, to observe, that, had his application to their pastor proved successful, he would have felt great pleasure in including, (in addition to the numerous interspersions,) a brief, but connected

account of their church, from the admission of Dr. Ichabod Chauncy, on the 29th of March, 1670, (the earliest date of their recorded admissions,) to the lamented decease of their late pastor, Mr. Thorp:* especially as he has recently been favoured with the loan of a pamphlet, published in 1675, containing a more minute account of Mr. Thompson's apprehension, imprisonment, and dying experience, than has been transmitted by any comparatively modern historian.

A similar intimation is due to the congregation now meeting in BRIDGE STREET—a branch of the church formerly meeting in *Tucker Street*, and originally, (March 15, 167½,) by favour of Charles the Second, of virtuous memory, "in a Roome or Roomes in the house of John Loyde, lying on *St. James Backes, Bristoll.*" From some respected friends in connection with LEWIN'S MEAD—the other branch of the same

* The inscription on the tablet erected to the memory of Mr. Thorp is inserted here, in compliance with the special request of a valued friend—an officer of the church.

In memory of the Rev. W. THORP,
The highly-esteemed Pastor of this Church and Congregation
for the period of 27 years,
who entered his Master's joy
on the 27th day of May, 1833,
aged 62 years.
During his Ministry this Chapel
was erected, and dedicated to the
Triune Jehovah.
He was an eloquent man,
and mighty in the Scriptures.

church—the Writer has been kindly favoured with information of which he would gladly have availed himself, had a similar civility from the minister of the *now* more orthodox branch of that ancient community enabled him to comprise in one account a brief history of both branches. Of their early history, however, many particulars will be found in the account of Broadmead.

From every lay-gentleman to whom he has applied, he has uniformly received the most courteous attention. But his applications to the ministers of Bridge-street and Castle-green, and some others, have not only been unproductive, (of which, of course, he has no right to complain,) but actually remain, to the present day, *unacknowledged!* If regret would avail, for the sake of the churches he could freely indulge in that painful feeling. But why should he? "*That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.*"

For pious Episcopalians the Writer entertains the most unfeigned regard. Many, both clergy and laity, are exemplary Christians. Notwithstanding a tinge of superstitious reverence for "*our* church;" an air of hauteur, arising from fancied superiority; and, if free from intolerance, a complacent assumption of *charity*, as though "the schismatics" were indebted to their clemency and kind forbearance, rather than to the immutable principles of right and

wrong, that they refrain from enforcing against them the persecuting canons of their church,—rising superior to their system, they present to a christened population and a secular church, a delightful exemplification of the graces of the christian life. But the excellence of their character, even though they were the majority, forms no justification of the principles and practice of that heterogeneous community of which they are proud to declare themselves members, —a community, which, notwithstanding the pruning and training of the early Reformers, — (innovations which are now loudly decried by a rapidly-increasing party in the very citadels and fastnesses of their own communion !)—is still ESSENTIALLY POPISH.* The difference between the two Churches, of England and Rome, is personal: they are of one family, and the resemblance is marked and strong. Of each it may

* By the kindness of Mr. Davey, Bookseller, in Broad-street, the Writer had the privilege of inspecting "*Mr. Leslie's celebrated Picture of the Queen receiving the Holy Sacrament at her Coronation*,"—a painting exquisitely beautiful as a work of art; but, in proportion to its truth, eminently calculated to inflict on the mind of a genuine Protestant, the most poignant grief. With the exception of the state regalia and the presentation of the cup, what is there to distinguish it from a popish pageant ? And, fascinated by the gorgeous display of gewgaw vestments, let the beholder withdraw to the less glaring performances at the College. Enchanted by the music, he must be; but will he not —*must* he not, if he enter into the soul of protestantism—retire with the deep, mournful, devout aspiration—From all *such* protestantism, "*Good Lord, deliver us!*"?

be affirmed,—Her origin is pagan; her constitution worldly; her doctrines—like Nebuchadnezzar's image,—a combination of "gold and silver, brass, iron, and clay;" her worship superstitious; her discipline impure and defective; her laws intolerant. The one sprinkles holy water on the living; the other, holy dust on the dead. Both practise a baptism, which they avowedly derive, not from the New Testament, but from human tradition—all the recipients of which are declared to be made, in their baptism, "children of God, members of Christ, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven:" an awful delusion, religiously inculcated as essential to the equally delusive rite of confirmation. Both consecrate the sacramental elements, and both require their communicants to kneel at an altar. The one dismisses her sons with extreme unction; the other presents hers with a consecrated passport; and both profess to clear the intermediate space between the two worlds, of hobgoblins and foul spirits, by the incantations of the passing-bell. Their vestments have been wrought in the same loom; their attitudes studied in the same school. The one assumes the power to work miracles at will; the other denies to all but her regular Clergy, the peculiar privilege of casting out devils. Has the Mother canonized her monks and her friars, her popes and her cardinals? the Daughter, elevating her magic wand, and waving it over royalty, has transformed a reckless

tyrant into a blessed martyr, and a profligate popish hypocrite into a "most religious" protestant king; and at the shrine of both, she annually prostitutes, by legal authority, some of the most affecting portions of the sacred scriptures—scriptures profoundly applicable to HIM, who was "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." The one prays to departed saints; the other embalms their memory and their saintship, by the consecration of churches and the baptism of bells in their sacred names—*Saint George* bearing the proud pre-eminence. Both canonize dead saints; both persecute the living. Their feasts and their fasts are, many of them, in commemoration of the same founders, the same events. Each has her Lady's-day, St. Michael's-mass, and Christ's-mass; Shrove-Tuesday and Ash-Wednesday; Lent, Good-Friday, Easter, and Whitsuntide, &c. &c. Cast in the same mould, the Daughter is indebted, for her superiority, to the chisel, the polish, and the paint of the English artist. The composition is the same amalgamation, in different proportions; and the features, a little varied, express the same general character. Emanating from one source, they are governed on one principle; and, individuals apart, are rushing forward to the same fearful destiny. "*Come out of her, my people,* (saith the Lord,) *lest ye be partakers of her sins, and lest ye receive her plagues.*"

The *right* to dissent in practice, if we disapprove in principle, can never be questioned by an Episcopalian, —the Church of England herself having presented the example, in protesting against some of the practices, and in formally separating from the external communion of the Church of Rome. But Dissent is justifiable, or it is not. If it be, we are justified. If it be not, she, having been guilty, is involved in the same condemnation with ourselves, and is therefore for ever disqualified for a participation in the hue and cry against heresy and schism. She cannot, in the same breath, renounce the authority and assume the prerogative of the Pope.

Nor are Dissenters totally exempt from the superstition and intolerance of Popery. Popery is a subtile evil, insinuating its spirit, in a greater or less degree, into every form of church polity. Have we no popes? no cardinals? no inquisitions? no officials? no paltry, petty persecutions? Have we no ministerial "lords over God's heritage"? no churches, who, with greater cruelty, harass and distress their pastors? True, our tyrants have no fangs, our censures affect no lives, involve no incarcerations: but persecution in its mildest form is of the essence of Popery. And to what, but to this principle, can we trace, among Dissenters, a superstitious reverence for human traditions, a childish fondness for priestly vestments, and a tenacious clinging to religious titles? And to what else can be

ascribed the humiliating deference to *great names*, irrespective of argument; the influence of the *respectable*, regardless of spiritual character; and the prevailing taste for pomp and splendour, utterly uncongenial with the exercise of spiritual religion, and the genius of New-testament worship? Are not these crying evils, so many indications, clear and strong, of the existence of the spirit and principles of Popery? What is Popery, in fact, but *deference to human authority and worldly influence in the exercise of spiritual religion?*

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." "My kingdom (says Christ) is not of this world." "Overturn, overturn, overturn, till He come whose right it is." "Thy kingdom come: thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

*Bristol, Dec.* 1840.

# BROADMEAD.

Two hundred years have elapsed since the formation of the first Dissenting Church in Bristol—the church now meeting in BROADMEAD. This event, the results of which are pregnant with interest and importance, was the natural consequence of the spirit of puritanism, and the taste for evangelical research, which, a few years before, began to be evinced in some of the clergy and laity of the Church of England.

About 1604, a Mr. Yeamans, a zealous preacher of the gospel, officiated at St. Philip's. But, while he complied with all the duties of his office, he felt it incumbent upon him to warn his hearers against "blind devotion,"—as bowing at the name of Jesus;*

* "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," must be understood either *figuratively*, of the homage of the heart, or *literally*, of the bending of the knee: if the former (and who will deny it?) what a miserable substitute is the latter! but if the latter, then *female* worshippers alone comply with the supposed injunction. Besides, if it be not will-worship to bow at the mention of the word *Jesus*, how are we to account for the non-observance of the form, when this same Jesus is called *Saviour, Redeemer, Lord*, &c.? Is there a new "five points"—*the adoration of five letters?*

and against a practice, always too prevalent, but piously enforced by a "most religious king,"—the profanation of the Lord's-day.

Mr. Yeamans was deservedly popular. His ministry was attended, for about twenty years, by those who were beginning to discern the essential difference between mere moral harangues, and the pure gospel of Christ preached with "an unction from the Holy One." Nor were they satisfied with only the stated observances of their church. A few aspired to a more extensive and spiritual exemplification of the principles they professed, than was required by the stipulated ritual. They met frequently, in private houses, for fasting and prayer, and religious conference—Mr. Yeamans meeting with them. And it is an interesting fact, that some, if not all, who constituted the first dissenting church were accustomed to attend these meetings. Indeed, nothing is more natural, as cause and effect, than that meetings for fasting and prayer, and the investigation of divine truth, should, if the mind yield to its convictions, lead to a separation from any Church, which conducts all her adherents, irrespective of character, from the baptismal font to the consecrated earth, with rail-road uniformity.

Mr. Kelly, the first husband of the justly celebrated Dorothy Hazard, was one of this pious band. But, about 1631, he was removed by death. Mr. Yeamans preached his funeral sermon, from Neh. vii. 2. the latter part—"He feared the Lord above many:" in which the preacher considered the language of the text as peculiarly applicable to his deceased brother.

In 1633, these eminent Christians sustained a heavier loss, in the removal to glory of Mr. Yeamans himself; and they began to fear lest they should be left "as sheep without a shepherd." But the "Shepherd and Bishop of souls" heard their prayers, and provided them with various under-shepherds from among the "reforming ministers" of South Wales—as Mr. Wroth, Mr. Cradock, Mr. Symons, Mr. Morton, and others—"men, of whom (notwithstanding the sneers of the Rev. Samuel Seyer, M.A.) the world was not worthy."

Happily, about this time, a Mr. Hazard came to Bristol. He was a young minister, celebrated for his piety, and for his strenuous opposition to the vices of the times. Sometimes he preached at St. Nicholas; and thither the friends of the late Mr. Yeamans followed him. But his continuance there was of short duration. His conscience would not suffer him to be a silent observer of the gross profligacy of both people and priests; and for his fidelity to his Lord, and to the souls of men, he was summarily deprived of his office. In 1639, he was a lecturer, *pro tempore*, at Redcliff church, until those who "had the donation" should provide a permanent minister.

One of Mr. Hazard's hearers was Mrs. Kelly. She was evidently a woman of great mental vigour; and is described as eminent for piety, and as bearing a noble testimony against the popish fasts and festivals retained in the Church of England. She kept a shop in High-street; where, on the day on which high mass was offered to Christ in the Church of Rome—the day which even Protestants observed as *Christ's-mass*

(Christmas) day—she would sit, sowing, with her shop-door open, as a witness for God, in the midst of the city, and in the sight of all the passengers; and this, in those days of thick darkness and superstition, when all descriptions of people, high and low, rich and poor, venerated that day above all others.*

The steps by which Mrs. Kelly was led to a decided and marked separation from the world, and ultimately from a worldly church, were these. After she and her associates had for some time met together for christian conference and prayer, they began to be more humble and spiritual; and more importunate in seeking after God, and heaven, and eternal life; and more earnestly desirous that public worship should be conducted according to the principles and practice of the New-testament church. Having continued these meetings about twenty years, and become a rather numerous company, they were confirmed in these principles and desires, and prepared to act upon them as soon as Providence should make their way clear. As might be expected, they were not exempt from ridicule and reproach. They were charged with meeting in secret for impure purposes; and derided for their holy and spiritual deportment in the common

* Nor, even in these days of comparative light and knowledge, is this popish mummery and will-worship abandoned. What thousands, who comparatively disregard "the Lord's day," observe Christmas, and Lent, and Good Friday, and Easter, and other "days, and times, and seasons" of human invention, with the most profound and superstitious awe—feasting gloriously at Christmas; fasting on fish during Lent; and on Good Fridays, eating "hot + buns" in honour of the Saviour! *Is this Christianity?*

transactions of life. Every thing they did was wrong! If they met especially for christian communion, their motives were impugned: if they exemplified their christian principles in their intercourse with society, they were (according to Seyer) "canting hypocrites." Such is the decision of the world and a worldly church.

Their meetings now became more frequent and notorious. As a city set on a hill, these disciples of the Saviour could not be hid. They particularly attracted the notice of the Lord Bishops and their satellites, who endeavoured, by every means in their power, to crush them. One day, meeting in High-street, (probably at Mrs. Kelly's,) they were assaulted by a mob of citizens and sailors.* Being informed that there was an assembly of puritans, and counting it a strange thing for people to meet in "a church with a chimney in it," at the word of command they broke every window in the house. When the uproar had subsided, complaint was made to the mayor; but he, instead of bearing the sword scripturally, as "a terror to evil-doers," and "the praise of them that do well," actually imprisoned some of the injured and peaceable worshippers! On this, some of them, being

* And, until very lately, this union of certain citizens and sailors has been common, whenever any violation of the peace has been considered desirable, to accomplish an object which could never be attained by honourable effort. But those triumphs of tyranny are past—we trust never to return. Since the establishment of the Floating Chapel, sailors are better known and better taught; they are not such slaves to intoxication as they were; nor would they now be so reckless in doing the dirty work of their lordly superiors.

zealous, public-spirited men, drew up a petition to the parliament, against the mayor, praying for redress. This petition was forwarded by Mr. Listun, who himself presented it to parliament. Parliament favoured the oppressed, and rendered them that justice which before they had sought in vain. The mayor was startled, and his fury prudently allayed. The citizens, being unacquainted with this favourable result, entertained not the slightest doubt, that when Mr. Listun returned, he also would be imprisoned, and punished even more severely than the others. So strong was this belief, that he was especially advised not to be seen near the Tolzey! But the next day, he went boldly to the shop of an old acquaintance, at the High Cross, facing the Tolzey; entering, doubtless, into the spirit of Nehemiah, who, in more perilous circumstances, exclaimed, "*Shall such a man as I flee?*" While he was standing in the shop, a sergeant was sent, to summon him to appear before the mayor. Of course he went. But the mayor, instead of committing him to prison, invited him to his house, and very respectfully entertained him. In the course of conversation, he asked him what he did in London. Mr. Listun replied that he went thither to petition the parliament against his worship. The mayor said he should first have come to him. He answered, that they had, by others, made their complaint to him; but, instead of doing them justice, he committed them to prison. The mayor was silent, very civilly taking leave of Mr. Listun; and so ended the first protestant outrage—a miniature specimen of what was to follow.

Why, we are not told; but, about this time, Mrs. Kelly was strongly advised by her friends to resign her widowhood, and to marry Mr. Hazard. Probably, perceiving the current of her religious scruples, he might suppose the concurrence and recommendation of her intimate friends necessary to induce her to look favourably on his proposals. The marriage was celebrated; but Mr. Hazard, in consequence, was soon involved in trouble. The "parson of the parish" instituted a complaint against him, because Mrs. Hazard would not "conform," and had openly, in the presence of the congregation, left the church in the middle of the sermon. He did not say why. But, through the medium of Mrs. Hazard, we find that he was insisting on the lawfulness of paintings and images in churches. On hearing of this complaint, she declared she would never hear him again. And she kept her word.

To escape the rigour of this man's envy, (for the Spiritual Courts were busy!)* Mrs. Hazard thought of taking a house in Redcliff-street, that they might spend the Lord's-day out of the parish; as she and her former husband had done in St. Philip's parish, that they might enjoy the privilege of hearing Mr. Yeamans. But, just as they were leaving home for the express purpose of taking the house, very providentially a woman met them in the street, and informed them that the minister of Tewin's (St. Ewin's) was dead, and that the people had chosen Mr. Hazard as his successor. Thus they obtained the "parsonage

* For *spiritual*, read *carnal*.

of Tewins, with a house and a benefit." Mrs. Hazard considered this as an especial answer to prayer; as she had several times said, "Lord, hast thou never a little corner, to hide us from the rage of man?" And a small house indeed it was: still, as they used it only on Lord's-days, they were able to entertain many pious strangers, who, bound to a distant port, were waiting for a wind. And sometimes good women, usually residing in other parishes, would come thither to be confined, that, being in Mr. Hazard's parish, they might escape the popish ceremonies of "churching, the cross, and other impositions," with which most of the clergy of other parishes "did burden them."

About this time, five persons especially scrupled the propriety of attending the Church during the reading of the Common Prayer; because, excellent as it was in some respects, there were other parts strongly savouring of popery. But, as Mr. Hazard necessarily read these forms, and as her absence would probably be perverted and misrepresented, Mrs. Hazard endured much mental conflict before she could resolve to discontinue her attendance. But at length, one Lord's-day morning, her mind was deeply impressed with the inconsistency between her principles and her practice. While she was in the act of going, being on the stairs, her doubts were so strong that she returned to her chamber, and opening her Bible, read the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses of the fourteenth chapter of the Revelation of John—"*If any man worship the beast*," &c. These words struck such conviction into her soul, that she immediately

resolved, in the strength of the Lord, to "go no more to hear Common Prayer."

This resolution and the formation of a "separate community," were consecutive steps. Accordingly, in 1640, the first Dissenting Church in Bristol was formed. It was composed of five persons—four men and one woman—the last, probably, being fully equal to the other four! Their names were,

Goodman Atkins, of Stapleton;
Goodman Pole, of Lawford's-gate;
Richard Moone, living in Wine-street;
Mr. Bacon, a young minister; and
Mrs. Dorothy Hazard.

They held their meetings at Mr. Hazard's, at the upper end of Broad-street; and, at the very commencement, they came to a holy resolution to separate themselves from worldly worship; entering into a solemn covenant, that they would, in the strength and with the assistance of the Lord, worship him more purely, persevering therein to the end of their lives.

Shortly after this, "on a time called Easter,"* because Mr. Hazard could not conscientiously

* "Easter."—This word ought never to have appeared in the English Bible; nor would it, if a certain scion of the House of Stuart, and his servile translators, had been honest. It is deeply to be lamented that the Committee of the Bible Society should emulate this betrayal of a sacred trust—patronizing popish translations, but refusing to sanction versions in which certain words are honestly and faithfully translated, instead of being transferred in deference to a bigoted tyrant. Πασχα, in Acts xii. 4, ought to have been translated, as it is in every other instance, the *passover*. It *was* so translated in previous versions.

administer the Lord's-supper promiscuously to his parishioners, he went out of town. At this juncture, Mr. Canne, a baptist, came to Bristol.* When Mrs. Hazard heard that he was in town, she went to the Dolphin Inn, and brought him to her house, and entertained him the whole time he stayed. He helped the "little flock" much. Being "skilful in gospel order," like Aquila he "taught them the way of the Lord more perfectly;" showing them the essential difference between the church of Christ and Antichrist. He instructed them how they should unite in church-fellowship, and receive future members. He exhorted them to wait upon God in united prayer, and to expect the divine presence, even with the gifts they already had; and especially to persevere in separating from Antichristian worship.

When Mr. Canne had been some considerable time in the city, he went to Westerleigh, about seven miles

* Mr. Canne had formerly been pastor of a church at Amsterdam—the immediate successor of Ainsworth the Commentator. He continued in Holland many years, and was highly esteemed by the English puritans there. He was a zealous nonconformist; and in 1634, published a work, entitled "*A Necessity of Separation from the Church of England.*" But his immortal work, is his edition of the Bible, with notes and marginal references. A certain learned Doctor, in the hope of depreciating his character, relates the following apocryphal anecdote:—"This Canne, (he says,) because no human inventions were to be allowed in the worship of God, cut out of his Bible the contents of the chapters, and the titles of the leaves, and so left the bare text without binding or covers." The venom of this neutralizes itself. He *could not* have done this without mutilating the text *at the back* of the contents of the chapters! We presume the doctor wore a wig; but *where was the wisdom?*

distant; and preached on the Lord's-day. Mrs. Hazard and the friends went to hear him, being desirous, as long as they could, of enjoying his doctrine. In the morning, he had liberty to preach in "the public place, called a church;" but in the afternoon he was denied entrance. The obstruction was by "a very godly great woman," who was somewhat rigid in her notions. Hearing that he was "an anabaptist," her prejudice overcame her courtesy; ("for the truth of believers' baptism had long been buried in the rubbish of popish inventions!") and she caused the doors to be made fast.

Mr. Canne then withdrew to a neighbouring green, and sent for Mr. Fowler, the clergyman, to speak with him. Mr. Fowler was "a holy man, of great worth for his moderation, zeal, and sincerity; and a sound preacher of the gospel." He presently waited on Mr. Canne on the green, where they discussed "the business of reformation, and the duty of separation from Antichrist, cleaving close to the doctrine of the Lord Jesus in his instituted worship." Mr. Fowler agreed that there was great corruption in public worship, and that it was the duty of the people to reform; but he did not think that a suitable time, inasmuch as the reformed would be deprived of their public places, (their churches.) Mr. Canne did not consider that of any consequence, as they could have a barn to meet in, where they might maintain pure worship, and keep the commands of the Lord as they were delivered. Mr. Canne continued two hours on the green, proving what was the duty of the people, under all circumstances: after which he and Mr. Fowler took christian

leave of each other, and separated. But the suggestion of preaching in a barn, was not at all palatable.

Mr. Hazard being returned, Mr. Fowler told him his wife was quite gone from the church, and would hear even him no more. And true enough it was, that she and the brethren, influenced by Mr. Canne, resolved not so much as to hear any minister who read Common Prayer. "And thus, (says the writer of the church records,) the Lord led them by degrees, and brought them out of popish darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel." These records enumerate no fewer than twelve degrees of separation.

The little flock, being united on scriptural principles, began to increase; and many said, "We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." Some, indeed, who were sincerely attached to them, and had gone with them, step by step, until now, demurred as to the propriety of their last resolution, and for some time stood aloof. Still they increased, though for the most part they were dependent on themselves for spiritual instruction.

But sometimes they were visited by Mr. Wroth, of Lanvaughas, who encouraged them to persevere, and to look to the Lord for a pastor. Whenever he was in Bristol, he was accustomed to lodge at the house of Mr. Listun, by whom he was hospitably entertained. In return for the kindness he received, he employed himself, in his leisure hours, in the christian instruction of Mr. Listun's children; sometimes conversing with them, sometimes catechizing them, and sometimes teaching them verses. Of the

last of these exercises, the following verse is preserved as a specimen.

"Thy sin: thy end: the death of Christ:
The eternal pangs of hell:
The day of doom: the joys of heaven:
These six remember well."*

About this time, Mr. Bacon, one of the first five members, and their teacher, was invited by some pious

* If ministers were more familiar with young children, and studiously attentive to their best interests, both in the parlour and the pulpit, they would have more attentive hearers, and more affectionate recipients of the gospel they preach. The cardinal fault of the preaching of the present day, appears, to the writer, to be an ambition to provide what is called "strong meat for men," and even dainties to gratify a vitiated taste—or flowers instead of food—to the almost entire exclusion of "milk for babes." Have ministers forgotten the injunction of their Lord—"Suffer the little children to come unto me"? or do they think an annual sermon to a Sunday School sufficient? Dr. Watts's metaphysical productions have immortalized his name on earth: but his "*Divine Songs for Children*," will insure him a long train of souls in glory.——And Mr. Wroth unquestionably displayed a sound judgment in teaching the children *hymns*. For though the Lord does not confine his blessing to any one kind of instruction, there are some more generally beneficial than others. Next to the sacred scriptures, scriptural hymns are invaluable: they are more easily learned, retained, and appropriated, than any other species of composition. The writer remembers a christian relative, about ninety years of age, who could not recal to her mind what had occurred half-an-hour before, sitting up in bed, and repeating with evident delight, fourteen or fifteen verses of Barton's Psalms, which she had learned when quite a child. What a motive for storing the mind with gospel truth, in verse, in very early life! In a dying hour, hymns, and even single verses, have often proved sources of the richest consolation. Gliding into the memory, when the mind is utterly incapable of vigorous effort, they become to the dying saint what the "Ready Reckoner" is to the tradesman at the close of a wearisome day—presenting, at one view, *a sum total* of christian doctrine and experience.

people in a neighbouring village to take the oversight of them in the Lord, there being, at that time no clergyman in the parish; and with great reluctance the church acceded to their request. Still, notwithstanding their loss, they were united in heart, and multiplied, and grew in the Lord.

After this, a Mr. Pennill, who had been a minister at St. Leonard's, joined them. Knowing that he was inclined to reformation in religious worship, Mrs. Hazard repeatedly urged him to exemplify his principles, and to separate from a Church which he could not approve: and she succeeded. The church also greatly increased. From the city and the neighbouring country they had enrolled no fewer than a hundred and sixty members.

On the breaking out of the civil war, wherever the king's army went, pious dissenters were compelled to fly. This was particularly the case in Wales; and as Bristol continued for a time in the possession of the parliamentary army, most of the church at Lanvaughas, with their minister, Mr. Cradock, came and joined the church at Bristol.

These two churches being thus united, and Mr. Cradock being of their number, they had the satisfaction of celebrating the Lord's-supper together—a privilege the church at Bristol had not enjoyed for two years, not having had any regular pastor. At first, Mr. Cradock administered the ordinance in the great room at the Dolphin; then at a member's house (a baker) on James's-back; and after that, until Bristol was surrendered to the king's forces, in 1643, they had the use of St. Ewin's church.

In defending the city, Mrs. Hazard nobly signalized herself; and had her suggestions been attended to, there would have been no surrender. But Fiennes was a coward or traitor, or both. On entering, and examining the works of the Castle, the king's officers said, that "all the devils in hell could not have taken the Castle, had not the Governor cowardly surrendered it." The very women, we are told, were so brave as to offer to march to the mouths of the enemy's cannon, and damp the bullets!

On entering the city, the cavaliers gave themselves up to riot and revelry. Apart from other excesses, the following are specimens of their awful blasphemy:—

"Where is now your God? Where are your fastings and prayers and professions? Where is your King Jesus? King Charles shall be king, for all King Jesus. God is now turned Cavalier."

"On the Lord's-day, they spend their time in dicing, drinking, and carding. And the chaplains that go with them, and should teach them better, swear as bad as any of the soldiers. One of these chaplains swore, 'By the flesh of God,'—with many other horrible oaths. And in a tavern, the Friday after they came into the city, a lord's chaplain wished that the devil might roast his soul in hell, if he did not preach such a sermon next Sunday as was never preached in Bristol. And even in the pulpit, in that very sermon, he burst forth with a fearful oath!"

Vicars, in his Parliamentary Register says, "They showed about the streets, a fool, or an ideot, set upon an ass, with his face to the tail; crying out before him, 'This is the God of the Roundheads!'"

And yet these are the men whom Seyer delighted to honour!

The origin of the term *roundheads*, was, probably, the practice of professed Christians, of causing their hair to be rounded off very short, in opposition to the exuberant locks of the courtiers and cavaliers: it is remarked, that "the very tips of their ears were seen!" How awful!

But to return to the church—As soon as the city was fully in possession of the king's forces, most of the members, both those from Wales, and those of Bristol, resolved to go to London; where they communed, some at All Hallows, but the baptists at Mr. Kiffin's church. Part of the way they were escorted by the king's soldiers, according to articles agreed upon at the surrendering of the city; but, contrary to these articles, some of them were, by the same guard, stripped and robbed, and so left.

In 1645, when Bristol was again surrendered to the parliament, the greater part of the church returned; but some had been expelled in London, for various errors; and some even who returned, had imbibed such strange notions, that the church was thrown into confusion and disorder. The consequence was, that those who retained their attachment to the simplicity of the gospel and its ordinances, separated from these disturbers, began to new model themselves, and required that whoever was resolved to adhere to the plain truths of the gospel, and gospel ordinances, should subscribe their names; to which many, being desirous, in all things, of glorifying their heavenly Father, most cordially assented.

They then entered into a covenant, to this effect:—That they would, in the strength of Christ, keep close

to the holy scriptures—the word of God—and to the plain truths and ordinances of the gospel, of church-fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers: and be subject to one another, in discipline and admonition, according to the rules of Christ in the New-testament scriptures—a covenant, worthy of high commendation, for its brevity and fulness.

On Lord's-day mornings, they usually heard Mr. Ingello, at All Saints; and in the afternoons, they met at Mrs. Nethways, in Lewin's-mead. She is described as "eminent for godliness, and for a good understanding in the fear of the Lord." They had meetings also every fifth day of the week, at different places, about four in the afternoon, for mutual conference, at which any of the members were at liberty to speak. According to the records, "seven comfits resulted therefrom."

During this year, they chose Mr. Ingello to be their pastor; and he continued with them four or five years, and the church increased.

But after a time, many of the members began to be dissatisfied with Mr. Ingello's general deportment. They disliked his "flaunting apparel," which they thought was not becoming in a christian minister. Added to this, a passion for music, which led him into company not suited to his sacred profession, gave great umbrage. The members remonstrated with him, but in vain. In reply, he said, "Take away music, take my life." In 1651, he was dismissed from the ministry in that congregation; and soon afterwards he conformed to the Church of England, and received a diploma, conferring on him the title of

D. D.* In 1660, he published a novel, entitled "Bentivoglio and Urania;" and ultimately he so entirely relinquished the ministerial character, that he became master of the band to Charles the Second!

About this time, a black woman, named Frances, joined the church. She appears to have been a consistent and honourable member; and her dying message to the church was, "*Take heed that they did let the glory of God be dear to them.*"

On the removal of Mr. Ingello, the church chose Mr. Ewins to be their pastor. Mr. Ewins was one of six, who had been sent by the church at All Hallows, in London, to preach the gospel in Wales; and, after a time, he became the pastor of the church at Lanvaughas, a few miles from Chepstow—the worthy successor of Mr. Wroth and Mr. Cradock.

Mrs. Nethway, of Lewin's-mead, being a very energetic and public-spirited woman, rode over into Wales, to hear this Mr. Ewins; and being much pleased with his preaching, exerted all her rhetoric to induce the leading brethren to endeavour to procure Mr. Ewins as their pastor. Consequently, a deputation was appointed to visit Lanvaughas, and to confer with both Mr. Ewins and the church there. But at that time they could not prevail, the church being unwilling to spare him. But perseverance will accomplish wonders; and few can long withstand

* All such titles, if given on *religious* grounds, are decidedly opposed to our Lord's injunction, "Be ye not called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." The term *reverend*, also, occurs but once in scripture; and then it is applied to Jehovah."

repeated applications. Mr. Ewins at length yielded to the importunity of the church at Bristol, especially as he had also received a very flattering and urgent invitation from the mayor and aldermen. And even the church at Lanvaughas were so far resigned to his removal, as to propose to *lend* him to the church at Bristol! but beyond this their charity could not extend. The following is the letter addressed to Mr. Ewins, by the mayor, aldermen, and steward of Bristol:—

"Good Sir,

"In pursuance of an Act of Parliament for the better maintenance of ministers to preach the gospel, we the Commissioners by the said Act appointed, being met together, to consider and advise of able and godly men to preach the gospel in Bristol, having much assurance of your faithfulness and sufficiency for that work, do desire you, sir, that you will please to come unto us, and perform the work and service of a faithful dispenser of the word of the gospel in this city; and forasmuch as there is a power given us by the said Act, to make provision for a competent number of good ministers, we doubt not but we shall provide a sufficient and comfortable maintenance for you. We shall expect to hear from you, and remain, sir,

"Your loving friends, &c.

"Bristoll, the 14th of July, 1651."

Thus Mr. Ewins was settled over the church; and by the mayor appointed city lecturer. He was to preach at St. Nicholas "every third day," (Tuesday.) On Lord's-day mornings, he preached to his own people at Christ Church; and in the afternoon, by desire of the corporation, at the church of St. Mary-le-port. In the summer he frequently preached at

St. Thomas's and St. Philip's, they being spacious, and capable of accommodating a large number of hearers. On a Friday, he preached alternately at St. Philip's and St. Michael's alms-houses; besides attending the conference meetings of his own church on Thursdays. A sermon preached by him on the narrative of *Blind Bartimeus,* was the means of the conversion of many. And in those "halcyon days of prosperity, liberty, and peace," it pleased the Lord to favour his church with a large increase of light and purity. Mr. Ewins was remarkable for meekness, patience, and charity; and so scrupulous about maintenance, that he would accept neither tithes nor salary, but only free gifts.*

About this time, the minds of some of the members began to be much exercised on the subject of infant sprinkling. And in 1652, Thomas Munday and Isabell Caffell, being convinced of the truth and obligation of believers' baptism, were reluctantly permitted to join "the other church in Bristol, that were *all baptized,* having one Henry Hynam for their teacher." This was the church formerly meeting in the Pithay, (now in King-street,) into which they were

* This noble feeling cannot be too highly commended. It was a source of satisfaction to an inspired apostle. Not that he thought it *wrong* to receive remuneration: on the contrary, he pleads for it, not as a favour, but as a *right.* But he gloried in being able to decline receiving that, to which he and all faithful ministers are entitled. It is much to be deplored, that, in the present degenerate state of the church, "free gifts" would not always be adequate. And yet they should be; and in proportion as we appreciate the gospel, and the value of the soul, they will be. A penurious church cannot expect a blessing from a bountiful Lord.

received "on the 18th of the fourth month," (June.) This is the first intimation we have, at present, of the existence of that church, the origin of which appears to be involved in obscurity.

The next year, another member, Mr. Timothy Cattle, wished to be baptized. To this the church consented; but expressed a hope, that he and others like-minded would not leave their communion. They also wished him to be baptized in London, and gave him a letter of introduction to Mr. Henry Jessey. About this time, several others were baptized in a river, probably at Baptist Mills. And some time after, the pastor himself, and Mr. Purnell, a ruling elder, were baptized in London.

The church, which had now long enjoyed the blessing of peace, received, in 1658, an important accession, in Mr. Edward Terrill, who, after his baptism, devoted himself, heart and soul, to its temporal and spiritual prosperity.

At length, however, their harmony was disturbed. Mr. Dennis Hollister, formerly a teacher among them, and still a member, being a great man in the corporation, and a member of parliament, desired also "the pre-eminence" in the church. While in London, on his parliamentary duties, he imbibed the most pernicious doctrines, and returned home with his heart rankling with discontent, and his head full of "poisonous new notions." At one church-meeting, held at his own house, he said, "THE BIBLE IS THE PLAGUE OF ENGLAND!" We are not surprised to find it added—"And from that time they met no more at his house."

Just then, "there came to Bristol, two men of strange principles," and forced themselves upon the church, claiming a right to speak. The tone of their harangues is described as very peculiar; and the burden of their song was, that they, and they only, knew the truth. All who did not agree with them were severely reprehended, and judged worthy of condemnation. These persons Hollister received, entertained, and patronized, openly defending them against the representations of his former friends. They were strongly suspected to be Jesuits in the disguise of quakers.

Soon after, Prynne published a small quarto volume, to prove that many of the professed quakers were not really such; but Jesuits and Franciscan Friars in disguise, sent into England by their superiors, for the purpose of promulgating their own doctrines. In proof of this, he adduces the information of George Colinshaw, an ironmonger, taken before the magistrates on the 22d of January, 1654, to the following effect:—

"In the month of September, 1653, informant had some discourse with one Coppinger, an Irishman, formerly a school-fellow of his; who told him that he had lived in Rome and Italy eight or nine years, and had taken upon him the Order of a Fryer of the Franciscan Company. He also told this informant, that he had been at London lately, for some months; and while he was there, he had been at all the churches and meetings, public and private, that he could hear of, and that none came so near him as the quakers; and being at a meeting of quakers, he there met with two of his acquaintance in Rome, (the which two persons were of the Franciscan order and company,) that were now become chief speakers

among the quakers; and he himself had spoken among the quakers in London about thirty times, and was well approved of among them."

Another discovery, of a suspicious nature, was made by Mr. Terrill himself. He was sent to hear the quakers, and to write after them, because he could write "characters," (short-hand.) He was directed to Skinner's Hall, in Lewin's-mead, the appointed place. But afterwards it was altered to Captain Bishop's house, in Corn-street. When Mr. Terrill went to this last place, he found many people there, but no speaker. His attention being drawn to a knot of men in the middle of the room, he overheard their conversation. One inquired of another if the speaker knew where he was to come. "Yea, (said an Irishman,) I told him last night." It immediately occurred to Mr. Terrill, that this Irishman might be a Jesuit; for not long before, an Irish Jesuit was apprehended, with his trinkets. He happened to know an Irish papist boy; and the next day, as the man was passing along the street, with other Irishmen, he asked this boy if he knew that man. The boy answered, he did. Mr. Terrill inquired what religion he was. The boy said, A Roman Catholic On being asked whether he were not a Jesuit, the boy could not tell whether or not he had taken the order of a priest or friar. But one thing is quite clear—*that an Irish papist had a hand in appointing the quaker's meeting!*

Hollister, having turned quaker, favoured these men, and thought to have drawn off all the members; but, by the judicious zeal of Mr Ewins, he gained only eighteen or nineteen. For two or three years

there was a paper war; and then the affairs of the church gradually subsided into their former regularity.

In 1660, in consequence of the return of Charles the Second, notwithstanding all his fair pretensions at Breda, the troubles of the church set in like a spring-tide. Nor were the presbyterians, who valued themselves on their respectability, exempt. They, as well the baptists, were deprived of their place of worship; and, after having spoken disparagingly of the poor baptists for meeting in private houses, were themselves compelled to resort to the same humiliating expedient—the example of the apostles scarcely reconciling them to such a degradation! The Bishop courted Mr. Ewins to conformity; but he acted on principle, and chose persecution with the people of God.

When the members were deprived of St. Nicholas and Christ Church, they met, at first, at their pastor's house, in the Castle; and there they continued for some time. But, being straitened for room, they took a larger place, near the end of Broadmead, called the Friars, which had previously been a chapel; and there they continued, "holding forth the word of life," and preaching the gospel of the grace of God, by our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the 10th of December, orders came from court, that all persons above sixteen years of age, should take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy; which many hesitated to do, on account of the "extensiveness" of some of the words. The members of Mr. Ewin's church, and of "the other church, under the pastoral care of Mr. Hynam," met for prayer, search-

ed the scriptures, and came to this decision—that, in all *civil* matters, the magistrate ought to be obeyed. They therefore prepared a paper, wherein they stated the terms in which they could conscientiously comply with the requirement. This they forwarded to the mayor, who sent it to the king and council, and, in the mean time, prohibited all molestation from those who were ready to seize upon them as a prey. Within a month, an answer came, that the oaths must be taken according to the letter of the law, and not in any other words. The order was peremptory: but, as the mayor said they did not intend any unscriptural obligation, they availed themselves of this concession, and many members, of both churches, complied with the injunction. "*So that trouble passed over.*"

On the 15th of January, in the following year, (1661,) the mayor sent his sergeant with the king's proclamation, to Mr. Ewins, and prohibited him from preaching in his own house. Still, he continued to preach at the Friars; and, though many threats were fulminated, the church was quiet, and the hearers numerous.

On the 25th of June, however, Mr. Ewins was summoned before the mayor, for preaching at the Friars, and charged to preach no more. Notwithstanding, he persevered until the 27th of July, when he was arrested by a sergeant of the train band, and conducted to the marshall's house, where he continued until the 12th of August. Then he was committed to his own house as a prisoner. But on the 25th of September, he was discharged in open sessions, and immediately resumed his ministry at the Friars.

During his imprisonment, the meetings were regularly continued, and some additions were made.

From that time, the church was undisturbed until the mayoralty of Sir John Knight; on the very first day of which, (Oct. 1. 1683,) he sent for Mr. Ewins, and charged him not to preach. But Mr. Ewins told him he must discharge his duty towards the Lord; and therefore, in that respect, he must not obey him, but the Lord. Accordingly, the very next day, he preached as usual, at the Friars.

In consequence of this heinous transgression, of obeying God rather than man, (though that man were even his worship!) on the 4th, Sir John sent his sergeant and his inferior myrmidons, to arrest Mr. Ewins, and convey him to Newgate. Mr. Patience also, a minister belonging to "the other baptised congregation," was committed at the same time. In the afternoon, the mayor sent a warrant for Mr. Terrill, (who was then exhorting the people,) to bring him and Mr. Simpson before his worship.* But, having timely notice of the approach of the officers, when they were near, the elders of the church advised Mr. Terrill to sit down in silence. This advice, of course, he adopted; and when the officers came in, he made his way, unperceived, through the people.

The mayor, however, was too intent on his object

* In the records, there is a studious difference observed between the ministry and the laity—the former having the more respectable appellation of *Master*—the latter, the more scriptural one of *Brother*. Hence, Mr. Terrill and Mr. Simpson are called *Brethren*. But, in a general narrative, at this distance of time, it does not appear desirable to observe any such distinction.

to be defeated by a member of a dissenting church! The next day, Mr. Terrill was secured in his own house, and, with Mr. Ewins, Mr. Patience, and Mr. Simpson, arraigned before his worship; and, because they would not give bond for their good behaviour, (which involved a suspension, if not an entire cessation of their christian duties,) they were all imprisoned at the gaoler's house, opposite Newgate; and, with the exception of Mr. Terrill, they were detained until the next sessions, about three months after. Mr. Terrill was released in a fortnight, sureties being accepted for his appearance at the sessions.

At the sessions they were all indicted for a riot, and tried; and, by the overbearing influence of the mayor, found guilty, and fined—Mr. Ewins and Mr. Simpson *fifty pounds* each, and Mr. Terrill *five pounds*. Refusing to pay these fines, they were remanded to prison.

After a little time, many persons of respectability in the city remonstrated with Sir John, for detaining Mr. Terrill in prison; when he told them, the reason why so light a fine was imposed on Mr. Terrill was, that he might not return to prison. Still, he would not pay it; and consequently he continued in prison about a quarter of a year; when some friend, with a kindly feeling, no doubt, but we think very unwisely, paid it for him, and he was released.

Mr. Ewins and Mr. Simpson, however, were detained nearly all the time Sir John was mayor. But about three days before the expiration of his mayoralty, he was seized with a fit of generosity, and his bowels yearned with compassion! The sheriffs, too, declared

that if somebody would lay down the fifty pounds for Mr. Ewins, they would be moderate! Availing themselves, therefore, of this passing gleam of sunshine, Captain Deane and Mr. Ellis advanced the amount, from which the sheriffs took *forty shillings*, and returned the rest.

And not only was Mr. Ewins released, but Mr. Simpson also, in September 1664. But Mr. Ewins's imprisonment, and the efforts he made to preach every Lord's-day to the people in the street, from a window four pair of stairs high, had made serious inroads upon his constitution: after his first sermon to his own people, he fainted away; and the results of this persecution were a gradual decline, and a premature death.

The Act of Banishment, passed early in the same year, proved a source of bitter annoyance. The church was so hunted down with officers and sergeants, that they were compelled to abandon the Friars, and to meet in comparative privacy. Their Lord's-day meetings were usually held at Mr. Ellis's; but, meeting one Lord's-day at Mr. Yeat's house, in Maryport street, they were interrupted by the mayor, (Mr. Lawford,) Sir John, several aldermen, and officers; they having been informed of the meeting by an unfriendly neighbour. They demanded entrance; but the door being kept fast, they forced it open with iron bars and a sledge. Mr. Ewins cut short his preaching, and concluded with a brief prayer: and, by the desire of the people, he and some others conveyed themselves into another house.

By this time the mayor and Sir John Knight had

obtained entrance into the room where the people were assembled, and soon sent some to prison. Mr. Terrill and a minister were taken just as they were leaving the house at a back door. Being brought before Sir John, he accepted Mr. Terrill's promise to appear the next day. At the appointed time he attended; and the mayor and Sir John would have committed him to prison, had not Mr. Terrill required *evidence* of his having been at the meeting! This not being attainable, he escaped an imprisonment, which would have been a prelude to banishment—the Act being then in operation.

Thus they were "hunted by these Nimrods." For some time they met in secrecy, at Mr. Ellis's; and though the meetings were numerously attended, it was long before they were assaulted; and then a special providence preserved them.

At a week-day meeting, a guard of musketeers was sent to take them into custody: but, having been apprised of their coming, and the darkness of the night proving favourable, they withdrew into an underground cellar, which had a communication with "Ballance" (Baldwin) street; and so they escaped, and left the persecutors disappointed.

Soon after, on a Lord's-day, the mayor and aldermen, with their officers, broke open Mr. Ellis's house, at the back door, and came in. But while these housebreakers were effecting an entrance, Mr. Ellis contrived to hide a garret door, by placing a large cupboard before it, and by that means sent away most of the men. Still, many necessarily remained behind, of whom the mayor and Sir John sent thirty-one to

Bridewell for a month, preparatory to ultimate banishment.

A similar process of hunting "the roundheads," was several times repeated, with various success. Poor Mr. Ellis frequently drew down upon him the wrath of the oppressors, for his kindness to his brethren; and at length, he was imprisoned in Newgate, upon his first conviction for banishment. He had formerly been imprisoned, with other eminently good men, at the marshall's, in Wine street: but he was patient under all; and, being sustained by the Lord, "like a Gaius and an Obededom, he entertained the ark in his house, frequently."

One Lord's-day, "in the eleventh month, 1664," (Jan. 1665,) a meeting being held at Mr. Terrill's, then in Corn street, the mayor's sergeants came and dissolved it, and took a Mr. Zephaniah Smith and three or four friends from London, before the mayor. Mr. Smith (the minister) was imprisoned in Newgate; but some time in the next week he was released, on the ground of his being a stranger, and having engagements elsewhere.

About this time, the church appointed special prayer-meetings, once a month, for the serious consideration of disorders, and remissness in attendance. And soon after, Mr. Terrill engrossed the names of all the members on parchment, that they might be called over at the administration of the Lord's-supper.*

* A wise regulation in some respects, but liable to objections. If each member were provided with a certain number of tickets, to be renewed at stated periods, one of which should be deposited in the plate when the collection for the poor is made, it

"In the ninth month," (November,) 1665, a troop of horse were sent to the city, to suppress the conventicles; and very abusive they were, at all the meetings they could discover.

At the beginning of the following year, Bristol was visited with the plague. It began at Bedminster, where it raged much. It soon spread, particularly in the vicinity of Lawford's gate. Hallier's lane, Redcliff street, and the Back, were also infected; and it was greatly feared it would spread over the whole city. This infliction, as such visitations generally do, struck terror into the magistrates; and induced a more lenient conduct towards the persecuted church; so that they enjoyed much peace and prosperity. Not only were many added to their numbers, but a spirit of inquiry, unknown for a long time previously, seemed to animate the hearers; and meetings for prayer and praise and spiritual communion, were more frequent, and more numerously attended, than for many years before. God also dealt mercifully with the city, very unexpectedly removing the plague, and thus dissipating the fears of thousands.

Mr. Purnell, the ruling elder, died in November, 1665; and "on the third of the twelfth month," (Feb. 3, 1666,) two brethren were nominated, one of them to be chosen as Mr. Purnell's successor—Messrs. Richard White and Edward Terrill. All the brethren, except two, were for Mr. Terrill—these two being Mr.

would be equally effective, and more in keeping with the solemnity of the occasion. The calling over of the names is rather *a la militaire*, and reminds one too forcibly of a *College-green parade*.

Ewins, the pastor, and Mr. Ellis, the only surviving ruling elder: they were for Mr. White. Their motives for rejecting so eminent a man as Mr. Terrill, must be left, at this distance of time, entirely to conjecture; but an attentive observer of human nature will scarcely fail to suspect, that they feared he would be *too influential*, if not rather unmanageable!* A very happy suggestion was then made by a Mr. Thomas, pastor of the church at Lantrishian, in Wales, —(though how he came to be present is a mystery!)— that the church should choose *both*—to which all agreed.

* The practice of choosing deacons by nomination, appears to be liable to many objections. In the first place, (as nominations are generally made,) it virtually excludes all the other members. Next, it occasions a collision between those who are nominated, a part of whom only, (except by a compromise,) can be chosen—a positive rejection being inflicted on the others. And it may happen, that in the estimation of the church, some other members would be more acceptable than any who are nominated. The church is thus placed in the predicament of a lady who has several excellent proposals of marriage, from which she selects the one she considers the most eligible; but would have been much better pleased could she have spontaneously chosen for herself. The only impartial plan would be to agree on the number to be chosen, and then, without any nomination, let every member bring, in writing, the names of those he most approves—the names of those only who are chosen, to be afterwards announced. This would be a real choice, without the pain of positive rejection. When dissenting churches shall be cleansed from popery, some such plan will be adopted. It will not avail, to refer, in reply, to the election of an apostle, in the place of Judas; for there the nomination was by the church, and the decision from the Lord. Nor to the choice of the seven deacons; for there we read of no nomination; and the seven were chosen by "the whole multitude"—the apostles evidently standing aloof.

On "the 6th of the first month," (March) 1667, these two brethren were set apart by fasting and prayer, to be ruling members—at least on trial! There were present, two ministers besides Mr. Ewins; and in the evening Mr. Jennings and thirteen others were baptized, by Mr. Thomas, at Baptist Mills.

On the 5th of April, in consideration of the constant illness of Mr. Ewins, arising from his treatment in prison, and his natural infirmities, it was proposed by both pastor and people, that Mr. Jennings should be chosen as assistant minister, to relieve the pastor in his numerous and onerous preaching engagements. This was agreed to; and, by another resolution, Mr. Jennings was appointed to administer the ordinance of baptism. A brother, eighty years of age, was, shortly after, baptized in the river Frome. This year the church took a large room in Whitsun-court.

The time was now come for Mr. Ewins to take leave of his persecutors, to "rest from his labours," and to "enter into the joy of his Lord." Having been long laid aside, through excessive debility, he died, on the 20th of April, 1670; having faithfully discharged the duties of his office nearly twenty years, preaching the gospel of free grace, and salvation by faith in the perfect righteousness and atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Like his divine Lord, he continually "went about doing good;" and, like him, he "endured the contradiction of sinners." Contemporary ministers expressed their admiration of his unwearied zeal, and of the constant and pleasing variety of his pulpit exercises; and those who were on the most intimate terms with him, stated, that they

never saw him "over merry, nor over sad;" but that he was habitually devoted to prayer, and christian benevolence. So fragrant was his memory, for fidelity to God, and humility towards men, that the very chief of his persecutors, Sir John Knight, could not withhold the honourable testimony—"*I do believe he is gone to heaven!*" He was buried in St. James's church-yard, on the 29th, and accompanied to the grave by a large concourse of mourners and spectators—such a funeral not having been witnessed in Bristol for a long time.

During the latter part of Mr. Ewins's pastorship, the church prospered quite as much as, under existing circumstances, could have been expected; and new deacons and deaconesses were set apart to their office by the "laying on of hands."*

Mr. Ewins was providentially removed "from the evil to come." Soon after his death, the Act against Conventicles was promulgated, and a general persecution arose, in which Bishop Ironsides proved himself to be eminently iron-hearted. This persecution, the records divide into seven parts.

The first Lord's-day after the 10th of April, (the day on which the Conventicle Act came into operation,) the informers were on the alert; and because the church could gain no information of their intended plan of proceeding, they closed their meeting-house

* It is very evident that the apostle Paul, in writing to his son Timothy, (1 Tim. iii. 11,) referred to *deaconesses*; recognizing, not a connubial union, but the official relationship subsisting between them and the deacons: they were their *official* "wives."

door. The informers immediately fetched constables, broke open the door, went in, and took down the names of those whom they knew, who were, in consequence, brought before the magistrates and convicted.

But persecution sharpened their invention. The next Lord's-day they broke a large hole in a high wall, which enabled them to hear the preacher in the next house, without being present with him. Yet the bishop's informers went again, and, not recognizing such a nice distinction, took down the names, and some of them were again taken before the mayor and convicted.

This scene was also enacted on the third Lord's-day; and on the fourth, the mayor went himself, with his officers and several of the aldermen: but, finding these means to be utterly ineffectual, they resorted to another expedient. On the Saturday evening, they raised the train-bands; some of whom, to prevent the church from meeting, nailed up the doors, and put locks upon them. Being thus ejected by force and power, for several months they met in the public lanes and highways.

About this time, Mr. Terrill removed from his house in Corn-street, to his "garden-house," near Lawford's-gate; and there the church assembled until they obtained another pastor. Even Sir John Knight, the hoary persecutor, appears to have been visited with some compunctions; for although he again occupied the civic chair, he connived at their meetings, and discouraged the informers. "*When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*"

The church, however, were in want of a pastor; and, with their concurrence, Mr. Terrill wrote to Mr. Vavasor Powell, then in London, to procure them an "able and learned" minister; hinting, at the same time, that he had heard of one Mr. Hardcastle, who had, a short time previously, united with Mr. Jesse's people: carefully inquiring if he were disengaged, or whether he was set apart to any office. Mr. Powell returned, for answer, that Mr. Hardcastle would be very suitable, if they could obtain him; that he was not at present set apart to office; but that Mr. Jesse's church contemplated such a step, if, on further acquaintance, they were mutually satisfied. On this, the church immediately wrote to Mr. Hardcastle, requesting him to visit them on probation. But, if Mr. Hardcastle's intentions were favourable, they were cruelly frustrated. He was taken up for preaching, in London, and imprisoned six months. The church, however, were willing to wait. But now another difficulty presented itself: Mr. Jesse's congregation were unwilling to part with him; and it was with reluctance they consented to spare him for one month, with the stipulation that he should then faithfully return to London. In May, 1761, he visited the church at Bristol, continuing with them a month, winning, unconsciously perhaps, their judgments and affections. Just as he was about to return, they appointed a day of special prayer, and invited Mr. Hardcastle to be present, at least part of the time.

Being assembled, the brethren and sisters declared their desire that Mr. Hardcastle should be invited to take the oversight of them in the Lord, as their

pastor; and requested Mr. Terrill to state the same, in writing.

Mr. Hardcastle being come to the house where they were assembled, (the house of their former pastor, in the Castle,) one of the elders announced the unanimous desire of the church that he would be their pastor. The members were then requested to signify their sentiments by "lifting up their right hand to the Lord," which they immediately did. The sight of so many hands, springing into activity in a moment, so deeply and solemnly impressed Mr. Hardcastle's mind, that he could not give the church a denial; and yet, as he was not regularly disengaged from Mr. Jesse's church, he felt that he ought not, at that time, to accept their call. He therefore said he would "leave it with the Lord, desiring to be where he might do most service for Christ." On reaching London, however, he soon disengaged himself from the church there, and promised to return to Bristol.

With this encouraging prospect, the church endeavoured to procure more eligible premises. They had been driven from Whitsun-court by persecution, and the place had been let for a warehouse. They ultimately succeeded in securing four large rooms at the lower end of Broadmead, where "the quaquers" had formerly been accustomed to meet. By the "lower end," is evidently intended the foot of the hill, the upper part of which was, at that time, a *broad meadow*. These four rooms they converted into one, 48 feet long, and 45 feet broad. They took possession on the 12th of August, 1671; fitted it up in eight days; worshipped in it on the 20th; on the 8th of

the following month, celebrated the ordinance of baptism; and in two days after, the Lord's-supper. This was the site of the present building.

In a short time, Mr. Hardcastle redeemed his promise. His salary, (there being then no endowment,) was fixed at £80 per annum; each member agreeing to give a certain sum; and two *poor* members, according to their circumstances, excelling them all. Henry Prowse, a journeyman shoemaker, gave *twenty shillings;* and Margaret Webb, a poor woman, *forty shillings.**

* "Endowments."—It is very questionable, whether *permanent* endowments are a blessing or a curse. Generally, they induce niggardliness in the members, drying up the fountain of willing consecration. The writer could point to a lamentable instance of this, in an adjoining county. The church has an endowment of one hundred pounds per annum: and what is the result? The voluntary principle is stagnated. Not many years ago, in that endowed church, an official announcement was made, that the Lord's-day-evening service must be abandoned during the winter months, *as they were unable to raise money to buy candles!* ——— This is one evil: but may there not be others? May not these endowments prove a strong temptation to some unprincipled man, to ingratiate himself with the church, with a view to the pastorship; from which, (once appointed,) so long as he comply with the conditions of the endowment, he can never be removed, except by death? That this evil has not already been inflicted, presents no security that it never will. Such things have been: and, after a very careful perusal of the various Broadmead endowments, I have been compelled to arrive at the painful conclusion, that the pastor may be a Unitarian on the one hand, or a speculative Antinomian on the other, and yet comply with all the conditions of Mr. Terrill's endowment—the most stringent of any. All the requirements are, that he be practically holy, (for which, external morality would be sufficient in the court of Chancery,) learned, (especially in Greek and Hebrew,) and a theoretical and practical baptist! ——— And do we never hear of

Mr. Hardcastle now received a second call, many additions were made, and on one occasion, in 1682, *a household* was added by baptism; namely, Nathanael Sneed and his wife, and their servant Rachel Clarke.

In 1673, John Fry, who was in the very depths of despair, was entirely recovered through the united prayers of the church; for which special mercy, they had a day of public thanksgiving.

Many were the threats against the church, on their venturing to assemble publicly in Broadmead; but Mr. Hardcastle being a strong-minded man, and naturally courageous, was comparatively unmoved. Some "lord of the land," then in Bristol, had received very heavy complaints against them; in consequence of which the mayor and council thought of sending for Mr. Hardcastle; but, after some deliberation,

another result?—a refusal to receive, *as members*, those whom Christ has received as members of his mystical body? The principle of mixed communion having been yielded, what reasons but *selfish* and *prudential* ones can be assigned for declining mixed membership? Yet, surely, these are not the scriptural safeguards of a Christian church!————There is, however, one kind of endowment which would essentially serve the cause of Christ—a *temporary* and *moveable* endowment, for the purpose of raising new churches, and of assisting them until they ought to be able to support themselves—then to be applied to another, and another, and another, on the same principle, to the end of time. Such an endowment, the doctrines of the gospel being clearly defined, must, unless perverted by the trustees, be altogether beneficial. How many gospel churches, humanly speaking, might have been reared, with the profusion which has been lavished on communities that ought not, even in part, to be supported by "charity." The most flourishing baptist church in Bristol has not any endowment.

they sent for Mr. Terrill instead. On receiving the summons from the sergeant, Mr. Terrill went to the mayor, Sir John Knight. The views of Sir John having, from some cause or other, undergone a great change, he was much more moderate; and, in fact, had long connived at proceedings which would formerly have roused his utmost indignation. But now, a most grievous complaint was preferred against the "fanatics," by "old Mr. Wright," who had formerly been sheriff—that he could hear them sing psalms from their meeting-house to his own house, situate in Hallier's-lane! Consequently, Mr. Wright and some others, described as "Sanballat and his menials," were determined to disturb them to the utmost of their power.

Mr. Terrill, with a well-timed grace, thanked the mayor for his urbanity, and that, through his wisdom and moderation, the church had latterly enjoyed quietness and peace; and, knowing that his worship *could* dismiss the complaints of such as were officiously troublesome, he begged the continuance of his kindness during the remainder of his mayoralty, which he regretted was so near its termination! Mr. Terrill was, in consequence, dismissed; and while Sir John continued in office, no further molestation was offered.

In 1674, Mr. Hardcastle, having been three years on trial, had a solemn recognition, and was dismissed from the church of which he had been a member, for the purpose of ordination.

In the few years of peace, which the churches had experienced, the additions had been very numerous.

There were already (1674) six dissenting churches in the city; namely,

Mr. HARDCASTLE'S . . . . Most baptized;
Mr. GIFFORD'S . . . . . All baptized;
Mr. KITCHING'S . . . . . All baptized;
Mr. THOMPSON'S . . . . . Independent;
Mr. TROUGHTON'S . . . . Independent;
Mr. WEEKS'S . . . . . Presbyterian.

The first three of these were situate in the parish of St. James; the last three, in the Castle. Four of them—Mr. Weeks's, Mr. Hardcastle's, Mr. Gifford's, and Mr. Thompson's—were called "popular" meetings; by which we understand *populous*, or large assemblies. Mr. Kitching's people, Arminians, were seventy or eighty in number; and Mr. Troughton's, still fewer, only about twenty, were not permanently located: they are described as having among them "some honourable women of note." But so extensive were the congregations of the other four, and so prominently situated and well known were their places of worship, that it is said, "the people did resort to them as common as to the public places, called churches."

In October 1674, what the church describes as the eighth persecution commenced, and fierce and relentless were its features. In September, a new bishop arrived, Guy Carlton, aged and grey in the service of the world, and a bitter enemy of the separatists from from "holy mother church." He had been a chaplain in the army of Charles the First; and had shared the exile of Charles the Second. On taking possession of his new dignity, as though to atone for some

deficiencies of character, he vowed to accomplish the destruction of all the meeting-houses in Bristol; that he would not leave a vestige of dissent; but that all should attend the Established Church.

A fit accomplice in these deeds of darkness and desolation was soon found in the new mayor, Ralph Olive, a vintner, a notorious drunkard—"a man much given to wine." Not only was he elected to the mayoralty for the express purpose of persecuting the nonconformists, but he himself declared that that was his only reason for accepting the honours and dignities thus thrust upon him!

Nor was the bishop's zeal permitted to expire for want of other agents to execute his righteous designs. One John Helliar, a lawyer, "crafty and subtle," and so notoriously impure that "the like of him was not in the country round," was the bishop's chosen aid-de-camp in this holy crusade. He was also the mayor's landlord, which enabled him to reduce his worship to the level of a subaltern. Poor Zion! how could she survive the attacks of a bishop, a lawyer, and a vintner!

Of this Helliar, a rather amusing anecdote is recorded. Having attended with the bishop, to apprehend Mr. Weeks, the presbyterian minister, he took down the names of several who were present at the meeting. One, however, hesitated to tell his name. And though he was pressed again and again, he still refused. At length, being urged by several to inform them why he would not tell his name, he answered, "Because I am ashamed of it." Being further asked what reason he had to be ashamed of his name, he

answered, with well feigned reluctance and shamefacedness—"Because it is *Helliar!*" It is needless to add that there was a general laugh at the mortified lawyer.

To strengthen and sanction his pious purposes, Helliar procured the appointment of churchwarden, in the parish of St. James, in which parish were situated three of the larger meeting-houses. And "labouring to cover himself with this fig-leaf," he pretended that what he did was by virtue of his oath, and in pursuance of his inviolable duty.

In his three several capacities, therefore, of the bishop's lawyer, the mayor's landlord, and St. James's churchwarden,—(not to add, Satan's ambassador!)—Helliar aspired to the honourable office of general spy and informer, holding regular visitations at Mr. Weeks's, Mr. Hardcastle's, and Mr. Gifford's, as though he had been consecrated bishop of their diocese! The *regular* bishop also sent a trio of his clergy—Pledwell, of St. Peter's; Heath, of St. Austin's; and Godwin, of St. Philip's. These, and occasionally others, would enter the meetings during preaching, stay some time, take the names of those they knew, wait upon the mayor, and give the required information. How their own flocks were fed at the time does not appear; but (says the historian,) "they audaciously came to devour us, in the attire of foolish shepherds; but inwardly ravening wolves."

From their information, the ministers of the respective congregations were summoned: but the churches were too wise to suffer them to be caught. They employed counsel; and, before the mayor and his

court, they pleaded their right to meet, by virtue of an Act passed about three years before, when the king was making war with the Dutch—in which, liberty was given to all the dissenters to enjoy their meetings unmolested, who would take out a license to that effect. And as each of these churches had obtained licenses for themselves and their pastors, they triumphed, not only over the bishop and the mayor, but even over "the crafty and subtle lawyer!"

As sheep driven together by wolves, so were these churches more closely united, in consequence of the similarity of their trials. They employed the same counsel at the expense of the whole; and two from each congregation were appointed as a board of management.

Happily, Helliar's first attempt was an abortion. The wise man was caught in his own craftiness. When he visited Mr. Gifford's, another minister, a Mr. Harford, was preaching. Helliar, being ignorant of Mr. Gifford's person, went immediately to the mayor, and swore that Andrew Gifford was preaching on the 27th of September. In consequence, a warrant was issued for his apprehension, and delivered to the chief constable of St. James's ward, who, on some pretence or other, for some time evaded the execution. Indeed, he would frequently be out of town on the Lord's-day, that he might not be called upon to take the ministers, who still persisted in preaching. But in this instance the church suffered Mr. Gifford to be taken, because they knew him to be altogether clear, at that time, of the information laid against him. Being brought before the mayor, Helliar had the

assurance to swear that he was the man; and, although he was several times advised to reconsider, lest he should be mistaken, he still persisted in swearing positively that he was the man. Many present testified to the contrary; and four took their solemn oath that it was another! The magistrates were evidently convinced of the truth of their statements, and Helliar stood convicted of perjury. Was that, we wonder, included in his churchwarden's oath?

The churches, availing themselves of their licenses, continued to meet, as usual, notwithstanding the menaces of the high church party. The bishop, foiled in all his endeavours to reduce them to subjection, and mortified at his want of success, posted to London, and bitterly complained to "our most religious king." But the deputies from the churches were awake and vigilant. They dispatched a special messenger, to wait on their London agent, that he might observe the bishop's motions, and counteract his designs, by engaging some lords of the council to apprise his majesty and the duke of the truth; assuring them how peaceable the city was before the bishop took possession of the see; and informing them of his furious proceedings, so contrary to the nature of that gospel of which he pretended to be the authorized conservator.

But the king fully justified the characteristic description of Rochester, in his proposed epitaph:—

> "Here lies our sovereign lord the king,
> Whose word no man relies on;
> Who never said a foolish thing,
> And never did a wise one."

He entertained the friends of the church with many

a fair speech; and, with inimitable grace, assured them of the continuance of their liberties. And yet, in the following February, he published a proclamation, avowedly against the papists, but actually against protestant dissenters; declaring that all their former licenses were now made void! Thus the king shuffled and tyrannized, the churches mourned, and the bishop and his clergy were gorged with satisfaction and delight.—"*The king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city Shushan was perplexed.*"

The very week the new proclamation was published, the bishop and his clergy buckled on their harness again. Accompanied by some of the aldermen and military officers, (a glorious union of church and state!) on the 10th of February, 1675, they paid Mr. Thompson an official visit. He was preaching. And though the people secreted him, he was discovered, and conveyed to the mayor; by whom, after a long examination, assisted by the bishop and aldermen, he was committed to Newgate for six months.

And "*Haman thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone.*" On the 14th, (Lord's-day,) the mayor, with his sergeants and some of the aldermen, visited Mr. Weeks and Mr. Hardcastle. They detected both in the heinous crime of preaching the gospel, secured them, and committed them for the day, to the custody of a chief constable. The next day they were brought before the mayor, at "the Towlzey;" when the Corporation Act was tendered them; and, as they declined adherence to it, they were again handed over to the constable, and in the evening sent to Newgate, to join Mr. Thompson. When Sheriff

Fielding accompanied Mr. Weeks to the prison door, he deridingly bid him take his leave of all his holy brethren!

Three of the ministers being now imprisoned, meetings for consultation were held by the principal members of the different churches. The presbyterians thought of discontinuing their services, as they were disinclined to hear a preacher not educated at the University, and not having received regular ordination. At length, however, they were prevailed on to persevere, without preaching—commencing with prayer; then reading a chapter and singing a psalm; and concluding with prayer. The church at Broadmead closed one of their doors during service, the people all entering by another—(we presume a more retired one)—but as soon as the service was ended, both were thrown open. They also appointed a youth or two, as sentinels, to watch when the informers were coming, and give the congregation timely notice. The female members and hearers, (naturally quick at invention,) crowded together on the stairs as soon as the services commenced, thus admirably barricading the entrance against the sudden intrusion of the enemy; who, by these means, were several times defeated.

On the 21st of February, the first Lord's-day after the imprisonment of Mr. Hardcastle, Helliar, not content with having captured the shepherds, went, like a prowling wolf, in pursuit of their respective flocks. In the morning, he found Mr. Gifford preaching, and immediately informed the mayor, in order that, if he were again detected, he might be

imprisoned. In the afternoon, he went to Mr. Weeks's meeting, and sent many to prison. Then coming to Broadmead, to complete the tragedy, he found the stairs crowded with women; so that, notwithstanding all his efforts, rude and rough as they were—one female being violently pulled down—he could not effect an entrance that way. Then he and his men went to the other door, broke it open, rushed in, took down the names of several, conveyed one to the mayor, struck two others very violently, and then bound them over to answer for the meeting!

The next Lord's-day, (the 28th,) these regular observers of the Sabbath were equally zealous. Finding Mr. Gifford preaching again, and being prepared with a warrant, they took him at once before the mayor, who, the next day, committed him to prison for six months, as a fit associate for Mr. Thompson, Mr. Hardcastle, and Mr. Weeks.

But Mr. Thompson was liberated before the full term of his intended imprisonment expired. The angel of death, by his Lord's command, entered the prison-house, and released him on the 4th of March, 1675. He was buried at St. Philip's.—*See* CASTLE GREEN.

The ministers being all removed—one dead, three imprisoned, and *their* deaths apprehended—the bishop's men and Helliar being in hot pursuit, and wofully successful—the extinction of the churches appeared almost inevitable. But the members were men of the right stamp. They animated each other's hearts; and notwithstanding all their discouragements, so far from "forsaking the assembling of themselves

together," they clung with greater tenacity to a privilege difficult of attainment, and exercised all their ingenuity to accomplish, with impunity, this "one desire" of their hearts.

In order to disappoint spies, who might be present as hearers, and yet not to exclude strangers, who might attend without any evil design, they contrived that a curtain should be hung all across, the space behind it being so arranged as to accommodate the preacher and his confidential friends. Consequently, if there *were* spies present, they could not *see* the preacher. And lest any should intrude behind the curtain, some of the members were especially appointed to prevent all whom they did not know to be the friends of Christ and his cause. When the time was come for commencing, this curtain was drawn close, and the stairs completely filled with female friends. Sentinels were also appointed without, who, on seeing the approach of the informers, passed the word with telegraphic dispatch and secresy; the preacher (a layman) sat down, the curtain was undrawn, the whole room exposed to view, and the people began simultaneously to sing a psalm! To prevent confusion, the psalm which was to be sung on the entrance of the informers, was previously announced; and, to avoid the inconvenience of reading it, all brought their Bibles, and read for themselves.* By these

* From this, it is evident they did not use any metrical version; but the pure language of scripture. On this subject, a remark or two may not be inappropriate. "I have long wished (says the late Andrew Fuller) to see introduced into the churches, *a selection of divine hymns, or songs,* taking place

means, when the mayor came, he was disappointed; they were all singing, and whom to take up for preaching he could not tell. When the informers were gone, the singing ceased, the curtain was drawn, and the preacher resumed his discourse until they returned, which they sometimes did three times during one meeting. Then again the preacher retired, the curtain was drawn aside, and singing resumed, as before. "This (they say) was our constant manner during this persecution, in Olive's mayoralty; and we were in a good measure edified, and our enemies often disappointed. *Laus Deo.*"

of all human compositions. By divine hymns, or songs, I mean the pure word of God, translated without any respect to rhyme or number, after the manner of Lowth's Isaiah, and set to plain, serious, solemn music, adapted to the sentiments.——— What is the reason that *Handel's Messiah* has had so great an effect? It is, in part, owing to the scriptures appearing in their native majesty, without being tortured into rhyme and number, and set to music adapted to the sentiments. I do not mean to say that Handel's music is in general adapted to divine worship: it was not designed for it, but rather for a company of musicians who should display their skill. But the same words might be set to plain music, without any of those trappings which recommend it to the attention of a merely musical audience. Such a sweetness and majesty is there in the poetic language of scripture, that if there were nothing offensive in the music, it must needs recommend itself to a serious mind. Without disparaging the labours of any one, there is as great a disproportion between our best compositions, and those of the scriptures, as between the speeches of Job and his friends, and the voice of the Almighty."—*Thoughts on Singing*, Works, Vol. V. p. 320.

Perhaps chanting, if it were less regularly monotonous than it is, and more or less emphatic according to the words, would best correspond with the sentiments expressed above, which cannot but commend themselves to every pious mind.

On the 18th of July, a Mr. Robert Colston, a soap boiler, formed one of the congregation. He was not suspected of being a spy, not being known as an informer. Such, however, he was; and unhappily, when the signal was given of the approach of the informers, the person who attended the curtain withdrew it too soon, not giving the speaker sufficient time to be seated. Colston saw Mr. Terrill in the attitude of speaking, and immediately left the meeting. When the sergeants went in, they told Mr. Terrill that information was already gone to the mayor, that he had been preaching. And the next morning, Colston gave the information on oath; and Mr. Terrill was ordered to be brought up by the mayor's sergeants: but Mr. Bodenham, who was in the council-house, and heard the order given, went and apprised Mr. Terrill, who immediately made his escape. Then the mayor granted a warrant against him; and the constables had strict orders to bring him up to the quarter sessions, which were held that week. But, poor things! what could they do? He could not be found! As some kind of consolation, however, under the disappointment, the mayor announced, in open court, that they would be sure to meet with him next Sunday!

But a tried people were not to be caught so easily. When the mayor's sergeants and constables went, as it was expected they would, they "searched diligently," as Herod instructed "the wise men;" but their search was fruitless; for though Terrill was there, he was at first so cleverly concealed, and afterwards introduced into a room under, that, to their

deep mortification, they were compelled to return without accomplishing their purpose. Several times, also, during the week, he narrowly escaped being taken.

On the 25th, Helliar saw at Broadmead, in the morning, a gentleman and lady from Coventry, who were clients of his, and whom, the day before, he had invited to dinner. His intentions were paralyzed. The wolf assumed the appearance of the lamb. Nor did he venture to molest *that* church, even in the afternoon. But his heart was breathing out threatenings, if not slaughter; and, like a heated caldron, his malice overflowed on the devoted heads of the presbyterians. As soon as Mr. Weeks's meeting had closed, he lighted a large fire, and burnt their stools and chairs with a rapidity which must have been the result of strongly excited feelings, until the landlord, fearing lest the house also would be consumed, came in and extinguished the fire.

And though the flame of Helliar's devotion to the pious instructions of his chief, the Bishop, was not so easily extinguishable, the churches enjoyed an unexpected calm the following Lord's-day, August the 1st. The truth is, he had some awkward concerns of his own to manage. He had been presented for perjury, and some other irregularities—peccadilloes, of course!—but still, requiring his presence at Wells, preparatory to the assizes, which were to be held by Judge North, on the 6th. These peccadilloes, however, are by others called "notorious crimes:" and yet, such was the corruption of the times, and the perversion of judgment, that the judge cleared him

of all his "wickedness, barratry, forgery, and perjury."

On the 2d of August, Mr. Hardcastle and Mr. Weeks were liberated from Newgate, the term of their imprisonment having expired. The next Lord's-day, Mr. Hardcastle preached at Broadmead. Helliar seeing him, went and procured constables and sergeants, and returned. Mr. Hardcastle reasoned with them, and, notwithstanding the violence of their threats, refused to come down, until he had ended his sermon, and concluded his prayer.* Then he was taken to the mayor, and convicted, by the Five-mile Act, of preaching in the corporation: but he could not be imprisoned for that offence, it being the first since his liberation.

The next Lord's-day, (the 15th,) Mr. Hardcastle had the temerity to preach again at Broadmead; and Helliar, with the unwearied perseverance of a blood-hound, in pursuit of his luckless prey, was there.

* A case, somewhat analogous, occurred only a few years ago, in St. James's Church-yard. It was one Lord's-day afternoon, during the fair—that licensed rendezvous of the devil. The preacher no sooner named his text, than up came a constable, by the direction of some pious churchwarden, (one of Helliar's successors,) and told him that he must desist, as the place was not *licensed for preaching!* The preacher very promptly told the constable he would, if he would kindly allow him to explain the reason to the people, and inform them of what he *should* have said if he had been permitted. The constable, in the simplicity of his heart, consented; and listened with open mouth, while the preacher briefly alluded to the interruption, and deliberately went through the whole of his sermon, that his audience might know what he *would* have said if he had been allowed to take his own course! But, poor man, even for this he had to appear before the bench of magistrates!

Finding him preaching, away he went for Alderman Lawford, his sergeants, the bishop's secretary, and others, to the number of twenty, who made great disturbance, and succeeded in taking Mr. Hardcastle before the mayor, who, the same day, sent him to prison. Being afterwards disappointed, in finding the services concluded at Mr. Hardcastle's, Mr. Weeks's, and Mr. Gifford's, Helliar went in a rage to a meeting in the Castle, where they were singing; but he could not discover the preacher. But, as Mr. Jeremy Holloway concluded in prayer, they took him before the mayor, who bound him to appear when sent for.

On the first Lord's-day after Mr. Hardcastle's second imprisonment for six months, (Aug. 22,) the mayor, with his sergeants and constables, and the Right Reverend Father, the Lord Bishop himself, with divers of his subordinates, presented themselves at the Broadmead meeting. The mayor sent up two sergeants to disperse the people—one of them, with a sonorous *Oyes!* thrice proclaimed, commanding them in the name of the king, and of his deputy lieutenant the mayor, to depart. But the people struck up a psalm, and paid no attention to the sergeant. Then the mayor, with his retinue, tried his own eloquence; but the singing prevailed: "*they kept stops one with another, and did lift up their voices together.*" The mayor, at a loss what to do, went down again, where the bishop was in waiting, who would himself have gone up, but the first pair of stairs were so dark that he dared not venture! Foiled at Broadmead, the bishop and the mayor went to Mr.

Gifford's. He had been liberated but a few days; and now, finding him preaching, the mayor and the bishop commanded that he should be pulled down, and carried away to prison.

At this time, it was rumoured that the bishop applied to the lord lieutenant, for a troop of horse, to suppress the meetings; but being disappointed, he went privately to London, to influence the court to interfere.

The following Lord's-day, (the 29th,) the churches were undisturbed; for both the bishop and Helliar were otherwise engaged. It was said that Helliar was gone to mass. Whether or not this was true, it is certain that, during the next week, he expressed himself troubled in his conscience that he allowed the day to pass over without any effort to put down the conventicles! Oh that Christians were equally zealous in their efforts for the cause of Christ!

The 3d of October was the first Lord's-day after the election of a new mayor and sheriffs, who were chosen to the great mortification of the bishop and the other persecutors. They were moderate men; and the church could not help believing that the Lord had in this respect heard their prayers. On the 22d the mayor made a feast, and to show his personal good will, invited the principal separatists in the city; which so troubled the lawyer, that he resolved, by every means in his power, to trouble *them*.

The bishop's secretary, complaining to the mayor, of the meeting at Broadmead, obtained some of the sergeants; who with the bishop's own men, and some new informers, among whom was George Helliar, a

relation of the notorious lawyer, entered the meeting between ten and eleven on a Lord's-day morning, and commanded the people to disperse. But seeing they did not move, one of the sergeants made proclamation in the name of the king, with an authoritative *Oyes! Oyes!! Oyes!!!* This also being equally unavailing, the steward's son and Helliar's relation took down the names of those whom they knew, and departed—*the people singing them out!* When they were gone, the church ceased singing, and concluded with prayer. In the afternoon they were not disturbed.

Their pastor, by favour of the sheriffs, was now permitted to reside in his own house. Broadmead, however—that endeared spot—was still prohibited. But one day, visiting Mr. Ellis, he met there a considerable number of the members, to whom he dispensed the word of life, and afterwards they united in celebrating the dying love of their dear Redeemer. For this unexpected interview and season of refreshment from the presence of the Lord, they devoutly exclaim—"*Praise be to the Lord, for his good ordinance, and for this opportunity!*"

Some time after, a most singular application was made to them, by three members of the church to which Mr. Hardcastle had previously belonged. This was nothing less than a formal and deliberate claim to his services as their pastor, simply because he had once been a member with them! It is needless to add, that the Broadmead church did not feel themselves under any peremptory obligation to recognize a demand preferred on such a principle!

Unwilling, however, as they naturally were, to resign their beloved pastor to another church, they were unable to retain him among themselves. His "work of faith, his labour of love, and his patience of hope" were ended. He died suddenly, after seven years' faithful service, on the 29th of August, 1678.

Mr. Hardcastle had a living in Yorkshire when the Act of Uniformity passed, by which he was ejected. He was also chaplain to a family of distinction in the same county—Lady Barwick's—to whom he acknowledges his great obligations, as also to her son-in-law, the Right Honourable Lord Henry Fairfax—"his constant and faithful friend in his sufferings for Christ." He was seven times imprisoned for conscience sake. He is described as "a man of good abilities and a bold spirit, fearing no danger"—"a champion for the Lord, very courageous in his work and sufferings." Before he came to Bristol, his zeal and constancy provoked many diligently to labour and patiently to suffer for Christ. He was imprisoned eight months in York castle; and then, because he would not, as many others did, undertake to refrain from preaching, he was conveyed to Chester castle, where he was detained a close prisoner fifteen months more. He was then released by a royal mandate, without being required to enter into any bonds; and he went immediately to London. There he embraced the principles of the baptists, and was baptized, and joined the church under the pastoral care of the Rev. Henry Jesse. For preaching Christ in London, he was again apprehended, and continued a prisoner six months. Twice also, at Bristol, as we have seen, did

he pay the penalty for Christ and a good conscience—each imprisonment lasting six months: "still preaching (say the records) as soon as ever he came forth, and so continued till his death." He was a conscientious advocate for mixed communion.*

* And mixed-communion baptists *on principle*, will always be candid; having very little, if any sympathy with those, who, "fierce for moderation," evidently show that *their* practice originates and centres in *feeling*. The former, however mistaken, deserve respect; the latter, however amiable, commiseration. Mr. Palmer, the Editor of the Nonconformist's Memorial, need not have lauded Mr. Hardcastle to the skies, as a paragon of "*candour and moderation*," just because he recommended a friend, under certain circumstances, to commune with pedobaptists, rather than with baptists. Had both churches been equally eligible in doctrine and discipline, as a consistent baptist he would undoubtedly have preferred the one whose views on baptism coincided with his own. But in this case he was evidently influenced by something exceptionable in relation to the baptists; and his advice to his friend was an exemplification, not of "*candour and moderation*,"—(principles more eulogized than appreciated or understood!)—but of *Christian principle*. Even if he had been a strict-communion baptist, *provided his friend approved of the opposite practice*, he might have given similar advice; and then, without any violation of principle, he would have manifested his *candour*. Two such instances, in relation to two female members, occurred at Kettering, during the ministry of the late Andrew Fuller. Physically unable to unite with baptist churches, and able, both physically and conscientiously, to unite with pedobaptists, Mr. Fuller advised them to do so. Mr. Robinson, the present pastor of the church, in a tone of high exultation, adduces these instances as an indication of a faltering judgment—a want of confidence—on the part of Mr. Fuller, in the sentiments he advocated! But why did not Mr. Robinson tell his readers that these individuals (long well known and esteemed by the writer,) had *always cordially approved* of the principle of mixed communion? In recommending them, therefore, circumstanced as they were, to follow the dictates of their own consciences,

But Mr. Hardcastle, "*being dead, yet speaketh.*" During his second imprisonment at Bristol, he addressed the following series of letters to his bereaved flock, which cannot be read, with a recognition of the

though not in agreement with his well-known views, Mr. Fuller, without any compromise of principle, exhibited *genuine Christian candour*—a candour which those who profess to enjoy the monopoly of that grace, would do well to imitate. Once, indeed, he erred, when, at Cambridge, he allowed the affectionate persuasions of a beloved friend to triumph over the deliberate conviction of his judgment; the results of which, as might have been expected, were bitter regret, sincere repentance, and a public dying retractation! But the instances alluded to by Mr. Robinson, afford, without any dereliction of principle, a rare specimen of a just and deliberate recognition of the rights of conscience. It is indeed "easy to conceive," as Mr. Robinson so shrewdly insinuates, "that Mr. Fuller had *very judicious reasons* for requesting that what he said might not be mentioned!" Who can tell? perhaps he thought, that, at some future time, when he should be unable to vindicate the principle on which he acted, some zealous opponent would eagerly seize upon this part of his conduct, and pervert it to the disparagement of his sentiments! If so, the sequel affords an admirable proof of the correctness of his judgment.

The writer ventures to hope that this note will not seriously offend those whose views on communion are *on principle* opposed to his own. May he not rely on their *candour?* It is introduced, less in correction of Mr. Palmer's irrelevant encomium of Mr. Hardcastle's "*moderation*," than in vindication of an honoured parent from the insinuation of controversial duplicity. By Mr. Palmer, Mr. Hardcastle's *consistency* is lauded as *candour!* By Mr. Robinson, Andrew Fuller's *candour* is perverted as *inconstancy!* Charity decides, and Justice echoes her decision, —both were candid—both constant. Mr. Palmer is beyond the influence of censure or praise; and for Mr. Robinson, I would breathe the unfeigned desire, that he may equal and even excel his venerated predecessor, both in *constancy* for the truth, and *candour* in the exhibition of its principles.

scenes they were called to experience, without exciting sentiments of high admiration, and emotions of genuine sympathy. An admirable exhibition of Christian patience and acquiescence in the divine will, and of tender solicitude for the people of his charge, they are peculiarly valuable as an illustration of the principles and the spirit which animated the hearts, sustained the energies, and influenced the lives of the despised and persecuted puritans. Let semi-religionists, if it suit their taste, follow unblushingly in the wake of David Hume, and hold them up to scorn and ridicule, as "*the godly!*"—may we be "followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises!"

6th Month 18th, 1675.

Dearly beloved friends,

The Lord has been pleased to permit the wrath of the adversary to break out so far upon us, as to separate us, and shut me up in prison again, and out of the public assembly for a season. Thus Divine pleasure thinks fit to deal with us. Though you cannot see my face, nor hear my voice, yet I can write epistles to you, which being read among you, may, through the blessing of God, be a means to encourage, instruct, and establish you. Beloved, my imprisonment speaks louder than ever I did. You serve thousands of others by this sacrifice and resignation of yours, and stir up so many prayers and thanksgivings for you. You engage the Spirit of God more among you. God can make this providence to be a greater ordinance to you, to all intents and purposes, than ever you had any. It is time for us to realize the gospel, and to consider upon what terms we took up profession, and what the cross of Christ means. We have had a long time of liberty, and have enjoyed our ministers and sermons, and ordinances, with freedom, and we grew dull, and slothful, and sleepy.

We would not be awake with our privileges, nor sleep without them. But when you see your minister torn from you by ungodly men, this may be an awakening sermon, and make you remember. And, my brethren, here is a bright side, a comfortable side: better be driven and pulled from our duty, than drawn back from it. Let us not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Let us stand by our posts. Let not the adversary reproach us that we dare not stand to our profession, and that we shall be weary in time, and that prisons will tame us, and take off the edge and briskness of our spirits. . . . . He is most in danger, and runs himself into it, that declines duty for fear of the cross and suffering from men. It has been our great error that we have not trusted in the power of God. We have reasoned about the worst that men can do, but have not believed the best that God can do. . . . . Is preaching and meeting a duty, only when men will suffer us, or is it our indispensable duty at all times, when men forbid and persecute? The gospel makes no exception nor suspension; but rather a supposition that we shall be persecuted, and hurried before rulers; and therefore makes provision (not for our hiding and withdrawing, but) for a mouth and wisdom. . . . . I think and am persuaded my second imprisonment to be a greater advantage to you, and to the gospel, than the first; and for my own particular, I find my spirit much quieted and composed; and do not wish one step I have taken, or one word I have spoken (bating human frailty) otherwise than it is. God will provide for you, and God will take care of me. You will find in due time that the gospel has lost no ground by this dispensation; but you must not expect to have great matters, and never exercise faith and patience. You must believe for what you cannot at present see, and patiently endure what will, in a little time, be removed with greater advantage than if the cross had never been laid on. Beloved, it is high time for us to be in good earnest in religion. If the credit of the gospel will not bear the weight of our outward concerns, our families, wives, children, and estate, how shall we

venture our souls, and the salvation of them from the devil, hell, and wrath, and the obtaining everlasting glory for them upon it? I am set for the defence of the gospel, and am every moment upon service for you and the gospel, day and night. If I had been at liberty, only a few hours in a week would have been taken up in preaching to you; and if I had withdrawn, I know not what blessing I could have promised myself upon my labours elsewhere, whilst I was consulting my own ease and liberty, and left you, (my charge) for fear of suffering, and made myself incapable of serving you, suffering with or for you. If any say, it would be but for a little time; I answer,

1. We must take up the cross presently; duty must not be delayed; no, not a moment, when there is an opportunity.

2. Is not a season of suffering righteously, to be prized as much or more than a season of grace?

3. Do we know that God will ever honour us with such an opportunity, if we neglected this?

4. Can we tell how many thousands are encouraged by our standing now, and would have been troubled if we had given way for one day?

Lastly, Who knows he shall live six weeks, or one week, or one day? And shall we not do all we can for Christ? Shall we neglect a present season of service, upon a supposition of serving him six weeks hence? Is this like gospel? See James iv. 13, 14, 15. To-day we will keep our liberty and enjoy our ease; and to-morrow, when persecution is over, we will worship and preach! Who knows what good six weeks' imprisonment may do? And what the power of God can do to work liberty by means of imprisonment, and convince an ungodly generation, that it is not interest and faction that makes us separate and meet, but pure conscience. Suffering leaves a testimony in their conscience, when shrinking might harden them in their wickedness, and draw out their rage more. I am called, by virtue of my office and place, to stand. My circumstances differ from others. My dearly beloved friends, brethren, sisters, and hearers! my heart is enlarged towards you. The

Lord sanctify this present dispensation to us all, and help us to find out, and fight against those corruptions that provoke the Lord thus to contend with us. For though men deal unjustly by us, and our sufferings with respect to them are for righteousness' sake, yet, with relation to God, we must acknowledge ourselves guilty, guilty; and that he has punished us less than our iniquities deserved. . . . . Pray for your enemies, as the gospel requires. Prepare for further trials. . . . . The Lord be with you, and give us a comfortable meeting again in the public assembly, to tell of all his wondrous works. You are dear to

Your willing servant, for Christ's sake,

T. H.

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Sixth Month, 1675.

. . . . . We must follow Christ in the way that he chooses, and not in the way that we choose for ourselves. Wearisome Sabbaths and troublesome meetings are appointed; separations and confinements attend and abide us. What's the reason of all this? Are there not causes why? Yes, too many and too good. Nay, too bad.

1. Have not our inward distractions and vanity of mind in duties and solemn worship, brought about our outward disturbances? Our distractions offend and grieve God more than our enemies' disturbances molest and perplex us.

2. Did we mix faith with the word? and did we come with that awe and seriousness, and reverence of spirit as became the holy ordinances of the great God? And are we not helped to guess at this as one cause, by that rudeness, profaneness, blasphemy, uncomely behaviour, which the adversary expresses, in our solemn meetings and religious worshipings? . . . . .

3. Have we not been too guilty of formality and hypocrisy, in our profession and worship? and are not our enemies permitted to overthrow our forms and

tables, and spoil the face and formality of our worship, and to call us a company of hypocrites and dissemblers? And

4. Have we rejoiced in this day that the Lord hath made? has it not been rather a burden to us, and the performance of it tedious and troublesome? And is it not just that now our persecutors should burden us, and load us, and weary us in our service and worship, and make it very uncomfortable, unedifying, and unprofitable? And

5. Whilst we enjoyed days and months and years of plenty, peace, prosperity, and liberty, we had not a sense, sympathy, fellow-feeling, of the miseries, distractions, and persecutions, that were upon many in several parts of the nation, and other places. What banishments, confiscations, confinements, spoiling of goods, and insolencies have many precious souls undergone in these nations; and we never heard of them, nor ever inquired after them, or have not been affected with them as became fellow-members and countrymen; and now our condition is become an object of pity to others. See Lam. iv. 11, 12. Who would have thought that the peaceable city of Bristol should have been the stage of so much desolating work!

Lastly, Has our love to one another among ourselves, been sufficiently warm and sincere? . . . . . Then should we not have been exposed to the reproaches, evil speeches, railings, and unjust reflections of unreasonable and ungodly men, and not have come within the hearing of so much bad language in our public places, from those that hate us and persecute us. . . . . .

There is hope that God will put an end to these troubles, and let us enjoy peaceable meetings, and behold our teachers again. . . . . We are sowing for posterity; the generation coming on will have the good fruit of this persecution. Many will be convinced by it, and many confirmed and edified. This cloud will quickly be blown over. . . . . Let him be evermore remembered by you, who studies nothing more than your good, and can rejoice in his present confinement, that the gospel and you may

gain any advantage, and remains, wherever he remains,

Yours, for Christ's sake,

T. H.

From Newgate—close prisoner.

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Newgate, Sept. 3. 1675.

Beloved friends,

It's a mercy I can any way reach your ears; but a greater if the Lord will every way reach your hearts. God can make an edifying sermon from any subject. . . . . Be of good courage; whatever you lose for God, you will find in God. I am here for a while, for yours and the gospel's sake and service. Watchmen must endure hardships—the heat of the day, and the cool of the night. . . . . Christ forbore meat and drink to preach, and Paul his sleep, and so must we deny our liberty, when God calls for it, and take up the cross of imprisonment when it directly lies in our way. . . . . The Lord may suffer wicked men and persecutors to prevail so far as to drive us from our standing, but they can never drive us from our steadfastness. . . . . To suffer, is the patience of necessity; to suffer cheerfully, is the patience of grace and duty. . . . . Resolve that your enemies within shall have no rest, whilst your enemies without let you have none. Be found diligent accusers of yourselves before God, and constant INFORMERS against yourselves in the presence of the great Lord. Be more angry at your corruption, than others are at your profession; and wonder at the patience and long-suffering of God that you have any intermitting seasons; that the fury of the adversary is let loose no more; that the devils themselves do not appear amongst you in their own shapes, but in the shapes of weak, wretched, and successless men, whom the Lord is pleased to hook and bridle; and still, with Sennacherib, turns them back by the way which they came. . . . . Forget not me in every prayer and

supplication of yours to the Father of mercies, that he would sanctify my present confinement to myself, and bless it to you and to many.

I am yours for Christ's sake,
T. H.

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Newgate, Sept. 8. 1675.

Beloved friends,

. . . . . Our evil hearts of unbelief have more struck at the honour of our master, than ever the persecution of ungodly men struck at our good; for no good can come of an evil heart, but abundance of good may come to us by means of evil men. . . . . Let us fall out with our evil natures, corrupt affections, and beloved sins, which have been the cause of these confusions and disturbances. Let them not live one quiet quarter of an hour in our hearts, that will not let us live one quiet hour in our meetings . . . . . Now, my beloved friends, the Comforter is with you, and the Comforter is with me; and if I had not gone away in the way I did, the Comforter might not have stayed either with you or me. The preaching of the gospel is the ordinance of Christ; and so is the imprisonment of the preachers of the gospel: but I never knew that forbearing to preach for fear of a prison did ever convince or establish any one. Fear keeps company with the pit and the snare; and they are proper for none but the fearful and unbelieving, whose place is ordained where neither I nor you would willingly come. Better go to Newgate with faith than to hell with fear. Yet I would not have you of the persuasion, that those who have not gone in the path that I have, are judged by me. I hope I have learned, and sometimes have taught you, that the circumstances and apprehensions of persons may differ. I know the way that I take, and another man may know the way that he takes. "*The devil shall cast some of you into prison*,"—not all of you. If Satan be angry with you and me, I can

be glad with it, provided God be less angry with us. . . . . Our judgment remains with the Lord. . . . . Can we think that he will leave us without a blessing, because we will not subject our public worship and ministry to the appearance of men, and power of magistrates, in the sinful execution of their office? . . . . . God will bless the dispensation to further good than yet we see, though already we see some fruits of it. Would you have me out of prison (where I stand in the presence and power of God, above the powers on earth) to veil myself and preaching of the everlasting gospel to the appearance of a wretched and wicked persecutor? This would not tend to edification. God would never bless such shifting and distrusting, though I could preach like an angel. But I have done with this. I am preaching as God hath ordered me to preach, and God will bless it.

I am, ever,

Your faithful servant, in bonds,

T. H.

Take this farewell. Whilst we are in our enemies' hands, God holds us in his hands.

Postscript, Sept. 11. 1675.

Since the writing of this, the Lord has appeared in giving me a few days liberty in my own house. Bless his name with me and for me. I did not ask it, I did not expect it. But the Lord has the hearts of all men in his hands; and he can make enemies to show favour, contrary to their own inclinations, dispositions, resolutions, and threatenings. I made my prayer to him when I was under oppression, and made my profession to him of my dependance upon his power; and I would commit myself wholly to him, remembering Ezra viii. 22. And in that very hour he wrought out my liberty! How long it may continue, I know not; but if I must return to the house of Jonathan again, it is for further service. . . . . .

Sept. 13, 1675.

. . . . . Pray that your troubles and afflictions and persecutions may be sanctified, rather than removed. Let my powerful corruptions be taken away, rather than this domineering prelate. . . . . Pray that the gospel may gain much ground by this present persecution, that many may be convinced and edified by it; that this may be a seed for an harvest. And pray for me, that my bonds may turn to the furtherance of the gospel. . . . . I take leave at present: but hope to be still meeting you, somewhere or other whilst I live. . . . . .

I am,
Yours, in the best bonds,
T. H.

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Bristol, 7th Month, 18th, 1675.

Your testimony to the pure public worship of Jesus Christ, and to his offices, as prophet, priest, and king, is now the word of Jesus Christ's patience; and for your faithful and patient enduring, the Lord will keep you from the hour of temptation. Your sufferings now are from the worst of sinners, for your profession. Your case or cause is clear. You suffer by men's wrath and malice. But there are judgments coming, that will carry the wrath of God in front of them, and may prove occasions of sins and snares, of fretting against God, and blaspheming his name; and these you shall be freed from. Your sufferings came in the best season, upon the best account, with the greatest advantage, safety, and *security* that may be.

Your constant faithful minister, servant, and sufferer for the testimony of Jesus.

Postscript.—It has been a day of trouble and rebuke and blasphemy; but God can stop the mouths of railing Rabshakehs, and put a check upon invading Sennacheribs.

25th of the 7th Month, 1685.

Beloved friends,

Do you not sit admiring the powerful grace of Almighty God? and are you not ready to say, as they once said of Christ—What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him! What a God have we, that can thus, all on a sudden, still the enemy and the avenger! It puts me in mind of that—When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dreamed, &c. This looks to us, in some sense, like the turning again of captivity: though we are yet in captivity, our task-masters are not all alike cruel. The dogs have not laid aside their canine disposition, only the Lord thinks fit to muzzle them for the present. We have outlived the rage of our adversaries. The living, the living shall praise thee, O Lord, as we desire to do this day. . . . . Beloved, you and your neighbour congregations in this city have drawn the eyes of the whole nation after you, and have made them turn aside to see the great sight, that the bush should be in the fire, and yet not burnt. See Zeph. iii. 12, to end. That a poor, peaceable, and impotent people should be preserved in faith, patience, constancy, and courage, notwithstanding the continued combination and conspiracies, the constant and cruel onsets, assaults, and endeavours, with the executions of power, policy, rage and malice, envy and hatred! What shall we say? The Lord hath spoken, and himself hath done it. . . . . .

It's our duty and interest to take notice of, and bless God for the beginnings of mercy and favour, even when the face of mercy does *begin* to look towards us; when the day does begin to dawn, though the sun be not yet in sight. . . . . Expect yet greater troubles and trials than any you have yet met with. These are but the footmen you have been running with. These are but the little fingers of Antichrist. There is this comfort in it, that you, having drank so large a draught of the first of the cup, *may* escape the dregs; and it may *not* come to your turn to drink deeper. You have had a double draught of imprisonment. Without doubt it's seasonable and wholesome,

and that we shall see in due time. . . . . Are you not made partakers of the gifts of divers, that tend to encourage, comfort, and strengthen you? I could wish my poor small papers might help a little too. . . . . It would not be strange if the stories of persecution, of informers, disturbances, prelate imprisonment, &c. should grow out of date in Bristol, and be forgotten: greater afflictions and deliverances than ours have been forgotten by a professing people. Lam. iii. 18—37. Learn this lesson—ever hereafter to fear men less, and trust God more. The more we venture upon him, the better he is. We have ventured on six months cross in his way, and for the open profession of his gospel, and it proved well; and we have ventured on another in the same cause, and I doubt not but it will prove better; and that we shall see, when we come to the winding up of the bottom. . . . . .

Let these things dwell in the bottom of your imaginations of your hearts continually, and forget me not in your prayers, who am

Your poor, yet comforted prisoner, for Jesus and the gospel's sake,

T. H.

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Dearly beloved,

Our condition seems to be as various as April weather, sometimes showers, and sometimes sunshine, and both necessary towards a spring: and such influence must we esteem and account the diversity of the Lord's dispensations to us: all of them working together for our further thriving, flourishing, and prospering in the house and ways of God. . . . . I hope, through the blessing of God, when the storm is a little over, you will see a great deal of fruit that is worth gathering up. The word of God is not bound. Persecuting times have been converting times: and the wall was built in troublous times. As the gospel takes notice in whose reign and government our Lord Jesus was born, and suffered, so in due time you will find that many will date their spiritual

birth, their love to the things of God, their confirmation in the truths of God, from such a year; the first year that such a bishop came to town; such a man being governor of the city that year, &c. See Luke iii. 1, 2. This hath been a year of the right hand of the Most High, and it ought to be ever remembered, and never forgotten. I have heard that you have had the plague in this city, which sent many to their graves; and some fires that consumed dwelling-houses and turned them to ashes; and I hope you have not forgotten them, nor what was the Lord's design in them. But of all plagues, none like the locusts that come out of the bottomless pit, and the persecution that is kindled by the fire of hell. . . . . .

I remain,

A prisoner for Christ's sake, and I hope for your and the gospel's advantage,

T. H.

From my prison at my own house,
8th Month, 2d, 1675.

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. . . . . My hearty prayer for you is, that you may stand fast in the faith, and grow in grace daily more and more, notwithstanding the opposition of the enemy without, and the still more dangerous enmity and obstructions from within. Our time is short, our seasons in peril, our spirits feeble, our temptations many, our trials great, our burdens heavy; but for our encouragement, our God is strong, our High Priest merciful, our Comforter abiding, our troubles perishing, our enemies dying, our work the Lord's, and our labour not in vain in the Lord. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Comfort one another with these words.

I am, dear friends,

Your most affectionate brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

T. H.

From my prison, in my house,
8th Month, 8, 1675.

8th Month, 23, 1675.

Dearly beloved,

I am treating with you about the great point of true and saving faith. I perceive that Satan is angry at it, and would interrupt both me in the writing, and you in the reading. I presently found out the cause of both, in Ephes. vi. 16. A counterfeit or common faith costs but little. Education, converse, example, custom, and common convictions, contribute to the breeding of it; which therefore will not endure in a time of sharp persecution. Common faith sees it no such hard matter to be a believer. True faith sees an almighty power as the author and begetter of it. . . . . A wounded conscience will be a thousand times a greater torment to me than any persecutor can inflict upon me. . . . . .

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8th Month, 29th, 1675.

A common faith leaves a man in a careless frame, and unconcerned posture about the dangers and sufferings that the souls and bodies of others are in and under; unless it be that ambition, honour, and applause, do stir up, and make a man a little active that way for a season. . . . . .

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9th Month, 6th, 1675.

. . . . . I shall conclude with this. Whilst you are so eminently confessing Christ with your mouths, and bearing testimony to his worship and ways, look to your believing with the heart, that it may not come under decay and diminution. That your faith, courage, and constancy, may abound yet more and more, is the desire and hearty prayer of

Your servant and fellow-sufferer in
and for the gospel,

T. H.

9th Month, 12th, 1675.

Beloved friends,

The consideration of your continued sufferings, and great constancy under them, doth at once affect me with joy and trouble; but with more joy than trouble, because the Lord gets honour, the gospel advantage, and the Lord is preparing for you an exceeding great reward. . . . . Oh! says the believing soul, has my Saviour suffered so much for me, and shall I not follow him when he bids me? Oh, blessed reproach for his sake! What an honour has he put upon me, that I shall be spoiled and abused and imprisoned for his cause: how glorious are these marks of the Lord Jesus! . . . . . Faith sets before the soul the persecutors as a company of dying men, poor creatures, that in a very few days will leave their bodies in the grave, and their souls in everlasting flames, if the case be not altered with them—the vengeance of God hanging over their heads, ready to bury them in eternal torments every moment. Oh, poor wretches, miserable souls! Pity them, pity them. Their disturbing you will quickly be over, but the wrath of God will for evermore torment them . . . . . Read over Heb. x. 30, to the end of the chapter. Comfort and encourage one another with these words, and pray for

Your fellow-sufferer,
and truly sympathizing friend,
T. H.

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9th Month, 20th, 1675.

. . . . . It's a very troublesome, distracting, distressing, and perplexed life that we live. Is there not a cause why? We live by sense and reason, by sight and foresight, and make little use of faith. . . . . I profess to you, my sense of things and circumstances we are under, put me out of my wonted method. I do plainly tell you that a great many of Job's messengers are upon the way, coming fast one after

another, and scarce a day will pass over your heads wherein you will not hear some saddening news or other, either at home or abroad, public or private, relational or personal, about saints or sinners, from men's injustice or God's just displeasure, respecting the souls or bodies of men, disappointments or losses, deaths of one kind or another: but if we can by faith get above the world, then we shall be able to frown at her smiles, and smile at her frowns, to endure her crosses, and despise her flatteries. . . . . .

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9th Month, 26th, 1675.

. . . . . Persecution will vanish. It is said of them that wagged their heads at Christ upon the cross, that they were *passing by;* and those heads were in a few days quietly laid in the grave, where they could wag no more. . . . . .

Your companion in tribulation,
T. H.

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10th Month, 3d, 1675.

. . . . . Let not that which is your honour, to wit, suffering for righteousness' sake, through the interposition of flesh and blood, sense and reason, become your burthen, and so you come to fall from your steadfastness. Confidence in God hath great recompense of reward. Banish the very thoughts of fear and falling off. . . . . .

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10th Month, 25th, 1675.

. . . . . True faith discovers thus much: that there is a reason and an opportunity of suffering which may be neglected; and if it be passed by, it may be such another may never be presented in that kind:

and yet sufferings of another kind, and much greater, cannot be prevented or avoided: and that therefore it's better to suffer in God's way than in a man's own way; much more eligible to endure trouble in a way of precept, than in a way of providence; from angry, ungodly men, wherein God shall be well pleased, than from a wrathful, displeased God, which may occasion wicked men to censure and insult. . . . . .

Your constant well-wisher,
and fellow-sufferer,
T. H.

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11th Month, 8th, $167\frac{5}{6}$.

These for my beloved friends the members and auditors of the congregation, yet, (notwithstanding evil men's malice,) through the Lord's goodness, meeting in Broadmead.

. . . . . If religion and worship were a human constitution, and that there was no expectation of any other recompence or penalty but what human favour and power could bestow or inflict, then it would be the most rational thing, the most prudent course, to square our practice therein according to men's dictates and precepts, and not, by any nonconformity to their rules, run the hazard either of losing what we have got, or of not getting more, by our compliance and conformity. . . . . If the principles from which, the the ends for which, the spirit by which we act, and the power through which, be all of them divine and supernatural, then I conclude that it is highly rational, and extremely suitable and agreeable, that we keep the path of duty, according to the direction of gospel-enlightened consciences, depending upon the faithfulness and power and wisdom of God, in all simplicity, purity, self-denial, humility, courage, and constancy; and take no notice of, nor have solicitous and anxious consideration, and hesitation—

1. About the inventions, impositions, commandments, reproaches, and persecutions of wicked and unreasonable men.

2. The wisdom and policy of flesh and blood.
3. The persuasion of friends and relations.
4. The insinuating arguments of saints and professors; or,
5. The supposed inconvenience of holding on in a plain and public way of gospel worship.

If any scruple of conscience arise, presently let us ask ourselves, in all sincerity and uprightness,

1. Which way will most honour God, and advance his cause.
2. By which means will the adversary be most convinced and weakened, or hardened and encouraged.
3. Which will tend most to the edifying, confirming, and strengthening the saints.
4. What will be most for the credit and honour of the gospel to the saints abroad, where the report shall come.
5. Which course would I take if I were presently to give up my account to God.
6. What should I do, if the cross and suffering were not in the way.
7. Whether is it gospel to shun a plain way merely for the avoiding of the cross, of what nature soever it be. . . . . .

In doubtful cases, it's the rule of prudence to choose the safer side, and suspect that part which interest and flesh and blood side with. If I go this way, I may sin; but if I go the other way, I am sure I do not sin. Better fall forward than backward. . . . .

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11th Month, 22d, 167$\frac{5}{6}$.

Dearly beloved and longed for,

I am now coming to a period of conversing with you by writing. I hope the next time, through your prayers, and the supply of the spirit of Jesus, to deliver the mind and message of Jehovah unto you by speaking. For a close therefore to the discourse about faith. I shall a little take into consideration that

excellent and full phrase, recorded Rom. xvi. 26. "*The obedience of faith.*" . . . . . And now, my dearly beloved, should not we pray fervently that we may not be deceived with a counterfeit, instead of a true faith? The Lord write all these characters upon our hearts, or else it were better they had never been writ on paper; for they will be evidences and witnesses against us upon record. We have been for above twelve months closely persecuted. We have great cause both of humiliation and thanksgiving. Of the former, that our sins should provoke the Lord to permit it, and to lengthen it out so much; that we have got no more advantage by our affliction, our dross and corruption no more purged away; that we have not followed the Lord in this suffering path with more cheerfulness and gladness, but have been under so many faintings, and fears, and doubtings, and perplexing thoughts; that we have engaged the enemies of God too much in our own strength, and have not more made use of gospel weapons in this spiritual warfare. . . . . Ground likewise we have, of much thanksgiving—that we are yet alive; that we are not given up to the will of our enemies, though we have been in their hands; that the Lord has helped us in any degree or measure to bear a testimony to his ways and worship; that we have not fallen down before our adversaries; that the gospel hath not lost, but gotten ground by our sufferings. Beloved, this is now a season of suffering; this season may be quickly over; let us be willing to honour the Lord in that way he would have us. Let us not cross the method and course of divine pleasure; let us follow and observe the voice of the cross as far as it goes, and not make a peace for ourselves by such means as God would not have us use, and before he thinks it good for us. When tranquillity and liberty shall be sent for us, we shall quickly have it: the providence of God shall quickly make all fair weather. In the mean time, let us bless God for any mitigation, any relaxation, any intervals of calmness; but whilst the wind sits in the quarter where it is, let us not promise ourselves a total immunity from trouble; and there-

fore let us keep the plain even path wherein we have met with, and may still promise ourselves, the Lord's presence and assistance. But if we once deviate, through the insinuations of carnal reason and prudence, though but in a circumstance, we know not where we may stop, and whether we may not be left to be weakened and bewildered by our own councils, besides losing the efficacy of all our past sufferings. None can be more desirous to avoid trouble than myself; but I dare not sin against conscience, to procure ease, and safety, and freedom for the outward man.

I shall conclude with a quotation out of "The Call to Archippus," written by a Nonconformist Minister, stirring up his brethren to preach publicly, though persecution and fines and imprisonment lay in the way. "Hath Christ suffered for us, (saith he,) both as our surety and our pattern, and have we such a cloud of martyrs that have so stoutly led the van, and shall we shift off (or shuffle in) our work, for fear of persecution? View the encouraging promises which Christ hath made to sufferers for his name. Are not these the very things which we have over and over preached and pressed upon our people; and shall we make them believe, by our flinching (our hitching, palliating, daubing, and compounding, merely to avoid the cross,) that these things were not so? Are these things true, or are they not? If not, why have we taught them? If they be, why do not we live up to them? Oh that we did but act as if ourselves had believed in what we have preached! Will it not be a real confutation to what we have taught, concerning the blessed advantage and glory of the cross, if we, when put to it, shall decline the cross, notwithstanding all the blessedness we made people believe we thought to be in it. God forbid that we should tempt men to atheism and infidelity, and make them believe there is no more in preaching, no more in promises, than a flourishing talk." Thus far that worthy minister, and much more to the same effect. Pray earnestly for me, that I may come to you again in public, in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel, and that, if it be

the good pleasure of God, an effectual door of liberty may be opened: however, that we may be fitted and prepared for whatever dispensation the Lord, in his way, work, and wisdom, shall be pleased to bring us under. . . . . .

Here the fragment closes, and we resume the narrative so pleasingly, and we trust not unprofitably interrupted, by the insertion of these truly pastoral letters. That they should have remained so long unpublished, is indeed a mystery.

Since the preceding pages were printed, the writer has been favoured with an important manuscript, prepared by Mr. Isaac James, comprising many interesting particulars not contained in any other document whatever: and he feels persuaded he shall better consult the wishes of his readers, by retracing at least some portion of the period already described, than by omitting, because not strictly in order, any important particulars connected with the history. These particulars will be limited to the pastorate of Mr. Hardcastle—a few isolated extracts being reserved for an Appendix.

On the demise of Mr. Ewins, as already stated, the attention of the church was directed to Mr. Hardcastle, to whom the following letter, prepared by Mr. Terrill, was sent:—

"We, whose names are underwritten, together with the rest of the church of Christ, (of which Mr. Thomas Ewins, lately deceased, was formerly the pastor,) being assembled together, after seeking the Lord by prayer, have unanimously elected and chosen you, (our honoured and dearly beloved brother in the Lord,) Mr. Thomas Hardcastle, to be our minister

and pastor, under our great Shepherd the Lord Jesus Christ, according to his holy command in sacred scripture, to administer his word and gospel ordinances unto us, to the end we may yield all sincere obedience to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who died at Jerusalem, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood, that in love we might serve him, without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. And therefore we, through infinite and rich grace, having obtained that wonderful mercy to be a church of Christ, and by him alone preserved unto this day; and conscious of our duty recorded in 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17, 18. Matt. xviii. 20. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. Acts ii. 41, 42. with Ephes. iv. 3—16. 1 Cor. xii. 28. Titus i. 5. with Acts xiv. 23. and Acts vi. 5. and Acts xiii. 2, 3. Now, in pursuance of this our duty and privilege, we do hereby testify and declare our joint and solemn call to you, our dearly beloved brother, Mr. Thomas Hardcastle aforesaid, to be our pastor. Given under our hands the 29th of the third month, Anno Domini, 1671.

| | |
|---|---|
| Thomas Ellis, Elder | Henry Ford |
| Edward Terrill, Elder | Robert Bodenham |
| Richard White, Elder | Thomas Jenings |
| Robert Simpson, Deacon | Dorothy Hazard |
| William Dickenson, Deacon | Joane Ewins |
| Thomas Rieves, Deacon | Mary West, the Deaconness. |

The following particulars, some of which were omitted with a view to their insertion in *separate* accounts of the churches now meeting in Castle-green, Bridge-street, and Lewin's-mead—an intention since abandoned—may with propriety be introduced here.

As a security against the informers, Mr. Weeks's people shut up one of their doors, and instead of a curtain, as at Broadmead, they put up a wainscot-board in a convenient place, behind which they placed the preacher, so that, though all might hear, no one could see him but friends, who alone were permitted

to approach that part of the meeting. And when the informers made their appearance, they had a convenient contrivance for conveying the minister into an adjoining house.

The expedient adopted at Mr. Gifford's was different. A company of tall persons surrounded the speaker, and near where he stood was a trap-door in the floor, through which, on the entrance of the informers, whose approach was announced by a vigilant door-keeper, he was let down into another room.

The church in the Castle was not so often interrupted by informers as the other three; nor Mr. Gifford's so often as the other two; Mr. Weeks's and Broadmead generally sustaining the first onset, and frequently occupying the informers until the others had closed. But in the week-day, the bishop's men frequently visited Mr. Thompson's place. He himself had been sacrificed, and his flock were not spared.*

* The following account of Mr. Thompson, obtained from various sources, was omitted in the preceding pages, for the reason before stated. Its insertion now, as a note, will doubtless be acceptable.

When Mr. Thompson was first imprisoned, his health was very delicate, and his life precarious. He was universally esteemed, and many of the most respectable citizens implored the sheriffs, but in vain, to release him from close confinement. An eminent physician also (probably Dr. Chauncy) strongly represented the danger of his continuance in that "stinking prison," and interceded that he might be removed to some convenient house, for air and requisite exercise. But although a bond of five hundred pounds was offered for security, the magistrates, being instigated by the bishop—that "lover of good men," and "good things,"—hardened their hearts, and were deaf to their entreaties. On the 4th of March, 1675, three days after he had been joined by Mr. Gifford, he left the

To frustrate, as much as possible, the designs of the enemy, they adopted the following ingenious expedient. Their meeting-house was a lower room, having two lofts, one above the other. They made a door to the stair-foot of the middle room, where the minister stood and preached, and was distinctly heard by the congregation, both above and below. They also had a curtain made, behind which, if the informers entered, he was effectually concealed; and they were prevented from approaching him by the door at the foot of the stairs, which was kept fast, none being allowed to pass through but recognized friends. If the informers proceeded to extreme measures, and

companions of his tribulation, to join the blessed army of glorified martyrs. The next day, as he was a corpulent man, and could not with prudence be kept longer, he was honourably interred at St. Philip's—professors of every description, except quakers, volunteering their services in conveying him from the prison to the grave. Nor need we suppose that even this exception was attributable to any want of christian sympathy, the repugnance of that body to all funereal display, on principle, being well known. Such a funeral had not been seen in Bristol in the memory of any then living, there being not fewer than five thousand followers, "which made the adversaries admire." Mr. Thompson was cheerful in his affliction, and expressed himself well satisfied in his sufferings, and with the cause of them. He declared that from his heart he forgave his enemies, and should rejoice to meet them in heaven who had treated him as if he were not fit to live upon earth. "As for my bonds, (said he,) I bless God for them; and if I had known, when I came in, that I should die here, I would have done no otherwise than I have done. The time will come when I shall be free from the aspersions of faction." He breathed his last while Mr. Weeks, his fellow-prisoner, was commending his soul into the hands of a faithful Redeemer—rendering perfectly unnecessary, either the consecrated passport, or the sonorous charms of the passing bell.

forced the door, while that was being done the minister had plenty of time to escape into an adjoining house. If they had timely notice, the preaching ceased, and simultaneous singing succeeded, as in the other meetings. Thus, in a great degree, the enemy was baffled.

On the 9th of March 1675, meetings of the four congregations were held by agreement, at four different places, for the purpose of fasting and prayer—Mr. Hardcastle's church meeting at Mr. Terrill's house. But fasting and prayer were heinous sins, in which they were not to be indulged. The bishop's men were on the alert, and, uniting with the secular power, determined, if possible, to prevent such unseemly acts. Whiting and three sergeants knocked for admission with a warrant; but Mr. Terrill denied them entrance; on which, in a great rage, they return for authority to force the door. This obtained, they resume their knocking with greater violence; but Mr. Terrill requested that no one would answer. 'Let them knock, and if they would, force an entrance: he alone would be endangered.' He therefore encouraged his friends to persevere in the path of duty, and continue praying, which they did; and "the Lord put a spirit of fear into the hearts of the sergeants," who, though strongly and repeatedly urged by the bishop's man, would not proceed to farther violence. "Ebenezer. *Laus Deo!*"

The next interruption was more ludicrous than serious. On the 14th, (Lord's-day,) the informers were very rude and resolute. Before the commencement of the morning service, Hellier and one of his

men came and sat down for a while. Then Helliar sent his man for a constable, a barber, living opposite the meeting-house in Broadmead. When they came in, the people were singing. Then Helliar commands them, in the king's name, to depart. The people not paying any attention, Helliar singles out Mr. Terrill, and commanding him to depart, charges him with being a ringleader. Mr. Terrill, unmoved, continues singing. Helliar, provoked by such contumely, lays violent hands on him, and pulling him with considerable force, orders the constable to take him away. The constable, threatened and menaced by Helliar, places his hand gently on Mr. Terrill's shoulder. Terrill not stirring, Helliar desires the constable to command the assistance of those who sat at the table. "Nay, (said the constable,) do you bring him, and I will assist you." So they stood for a while, and the people kept singing. Then came three or four sergeants, and Helliar commands one of them to remove Mr. Terrill. He tried, first pulling him by the hand, then by the arm; but no, he would not move. Then the sergeant entreated him to go, and taking his hat from the table, placed it on his head. But Mr. Terrill, as they were still singing, took it off again. Then the sergeant replaced it, and Mr. Terrill removed it; these alternations being repeated several times. Then, having pretty well exhausted themselves, and all to no purpose, (for they appeared unwilling to proceed to extremities,) they left him, enrolled a few names, and departed.

In the afternoon, Helliar and his men, with several from the Right Reverend Father, renewed the attack.

The meeting being thronged, it was with much difficulty they forced their way through the people, to "some grave women who sat in chairs." These, Helliar and the sergeants pushed and pulled about very rudely. One "ancient gentlewoman," especially, they attacked, endeavouring to throw her out of the chair; but, with the spirit of a woman, she determined to keep her seat. Then they mount a bench, and striding across a rail, first the sergeant, then the bishop's man, availing themselves of so favourable a position, pull the gentlewoman's chair backward; and she, not choosing voluntarily to abandon the post of honour, was thrown with violence to the ground. Then, in great rage, not content with the glorious victory they had achieved over "old Mrs. Ekely," they flung the chair several yards from them, and but for the providential interposition of a rail, it is said, "they might have *spoiled* some of the women behind."* After much pulling and hauling, they carried one young man off, simply because he refused to tell his name. And coming to a gentleman who had recently arrived in Bristol, from London, they used considerable violence, demanding his name. He did not choose to tell them, and they tried hard to capture him. One of the sergeants, sanctioned by Helliar, thrust his mace under his arm, to force his hand from the rail; but, unable to effect his purpose,

* The term *spoiling* was formerly commonly used for materially injuring. Thus, when a mason struck Fox the quaker on his hand at Ulverstone, some of the people cried out, "He has *spoiled* his hand for ever."—*J. James, from Sewell.*

he calls to his aid two of the bishop's men—his coachman and sexton—who pulled him, one one way, the other the other, "until the sexton did sweat again, that he wiped his face with his handkerchief!" At length he told them his name; and then, leaving him, they pounced on another gentleman, who was in Bristol on the occasion of his son's death. With much difficulty they prevailed on him to tell his name; then, not content with that, they demanded to know his residence; and because he would not satisfy them, endeavoured to force him from his seat. To accomplish this, however, the spiritual power was requisite. Nor was it withheld. Some of the bishop's men seized his legs, others his arms, and with some difficulty they overpowered him, and carried him to Bridewell, where he remained some time, and was afterwards committed to Newgate. Then, after calling some grave women confident jades, Helliar gave the signal for moving. The people kept on singing, and when they were gone, the exercises of the day were closed with prayer.

On the same day, a more serious and solemn invasion was made on this christian community. Death came up into their palace, and bore away a revered sister. "Honored sister Hazard (say the records,) in the eighty-fourth year of her age, in the evening of a Sabbath, (which she used carefully to sanctify,) as a shock of corn fully ripe, departed this life, and began her Sabbath of eternal rest, after she had faithfully served the Lord in her generation. She was the first woman member of this church; being but five began separation here—four men and she. Interred at Philip's."

The next Lord's-day, the 21st, the annoyances were renewed, and the routine was much as usual. Helliar, bishop's men, and serjeants commanding — people singing and disregarding — informers marching up and down, taking names—and the people, for once, departing, and leaving the officers behind them!

The following Lord's-day, the 28th, they were quiet at Broadmead in the morning, the mayor, several aldermen, serjeants, and informers, being at Mr. Weeks's place. But in the afternoon *their* turn came. Half an hour before the time, Helliar, an alderman, two bishop's men, with several constables, came, and endeavoured to remove the women that were present. But the people sit firm, and commence singing. Alderman Streamer directed the men to particular individuals; among whom, was Mr. Dickenson, who made no resistance. On this they required his assistance to remove others, and because he refused, Helliar sent him to Bridewell. Then they secured the doors, recorded the names, and departed. Just as they were leaving, up comes the mayor's party, who had been at Mr. Thompson's, and were greatly disturbed to find such a throng of people, being occupied an hour and a half in taking down the names. A crowd was gathered round the door, and all Broadmead seemed up in arms. As they told their names, Helliar jeered them, and several he beat with his staff. Alderman Streamer sent Mrs. Ellis, the elder, to Bridewell, after she had told her name, because she did not choose to satisfy his curiosity as to whether she was a wife or a widow, amusing himself with calling her, old carrion! "Then this grave gentlewoman and ancient citizen

was, as others, abused." But the alderman was destined to disappointment. As the sexton, the bishop's man, was escorting his charge to Bridewell, a rescue was effected. Some boys and young men (who, it seems, had no particular veneration for the sexton,) contrived to get between him and Mrs. Ellis, and pushed her into a house on James's back ; and so he lost her, and went and told his woeful tale to the alderman, who was greatly enraged. The mayor, at the same time, sent a young girl to Newgate, because she refused to tell her name ; and his companions, Helliar among the rest, amused themselves with calling the men rogues, and the wives of respectable gentlemen names, "not meet to be named." In the evening Mr. Dickenson was released, on promising to appear the next day ; when, because he would not give sureties for good behaviour, he was committed to Newgate, sureties for his appearance having been refused. In the first instance, he was illegally sent to prison by Helliar ; but when this was stated, Alderman Hicks, to save Helliar, said *he* had committed him—a wilful and deliberate falsehood, he not having been present until after Mr. Dickenson was removed. "Thus (say the records,) may be seen how the aldermen justify these wicked informers."

The week-day meetings were now tolerably quiet. "Praise be to the Lord, who brought it about by these means." With the exception of Saturday, there was a meeting of one or other of the congregations, every evening. These meetings the informers regularly attended, and the next day as regularly laid their informations before the mayor; so that, with

granting warrants, sending their serjeants, ordering constables, receiving information, and conducting legal examinations, the magistrates were completely wearied out, and complained that they had little else to do at the Tolzey but about meetings! To remedy this inconvenience, and to gain a little breathing time, they limited this particular department of magisterial employment to one day in the week, thereby sparing themselves for their heavy engagements on the Sabbath. "By this way, (say the sufferers,) all keeping constant to their places and duty, the Lord many times gave us rest, and food for our souls, when we should work for our bodies, and but the Lord's-day to witness for him."

"Upon the 4th of April, (they add,) being Easter, our adversaries being busy upon a superstitious account, we had rest and peace. The proud fierce prelate, having received the sop, the next morning, very early, hasted away to London about his master's work, in order to his sitting in Parliament, wherein he strenuously endeavoured against us, but through the Lord, effected little."

On the 11th and 18th the church had rest. Lest, however they should forget their true position, they had, each day, a solitary visit from the bishop's man, the sexton, who looked very wishfully towards the spot where he judged the preacher was, but the curtain interposed between him and the object of his search, and very provokingly would not undraw.

On the evening of the 24th, they received a friendly intimation of the visitors they might expect the next day, and accordingly contrived to have a full meeting

at an early hour. With a slight interruption from "that wicked man, Helliar," they continued very comfortable until about half-past eleven, when those who were weak or unable to stay, were advised to retire, the remainder continuing, lest, if they left, they should have the doors closed against them. Nor was this precaution unnecessary. Mr. Weeks's people having gone home, Helliar went and dined in their place, and then threw their chairs and stools out into the street, and some into the river behind James's back. And similar treatment was intended for Broadmead; but while the constables were gone home to dinner, the members who had left returned, and the place was filled. About two o'clock, as Mr. Terrill was speaking, in came two of the bishop's men, to see what they could see, and hear what they could hear. The people immediately led off a tune, and continued singing till the men withdrew. In about half an hour, the mayor and Alderman Streamer, with a long stream of officers, make their appearance. The people sing heartily, without having even to read the psalms. This raised the choler of the mayor, who snatches a bible from one man with such vehemence, "that the book flew over the people's heads, three or four yards!" Then, in the king's name, he commands them to depart. The people keep on singing, intently looking on their books. Perceiving himself disregarded, the mayor reminds them that he had given them sufficient warning, posts down to the door, orders it to be secured, and suffers none to depart without stating their names. As they went out, he sent three to Newgate—("one, brother Simpson, that aged

disciple")—having previously sent six of Mr. Weeks's people, charging them with a riot, because, being shut out of their own place, they stood in the street to listen to a friend who was preaching to them from the window of a private house. The house was broken open, but happily the minister escaped. "This day (the Broadmeadians add,) Whiting, the bishop's man, broke our pulpit; and thus they trampled upon us!"

That week the bishop's men were very officious, dancing attendance from meeting to meeting every day. On the 5th day, the 29th, they and the sergeants—church and state—visit Broadmead, and would not retire until the service was concluded. They very roughly handled Mr. Terrill, and one of them sent for an order from the mayor to take him. Mr. Terrill obeyed, and after some debate, the mayor said, he would send him to prison. Helliar being in the room, with Sheriff Little, and some others. Mr. Terrill desired to know of the mayor by what law he would send him to prison. "Oh! if I act contrary to law, you have your remedy against me." "But what is my offence." "Being at a meeting." "But being at a meeting does not make me an offender, unless there was something done there that made the meeting criminal." "You were singing." "But singing psalms is not contrary to the liturgy of the Church of England." Here Helliar complained that Mr. Terrill was a ringleader, and he did believe he was their preacher, and no good would be done if the mayor suffered him—"Yes, it is so; he is one of the heads." "We own no head but Jesus Christ." "Then you do not own the king to be

head." "Not so; I own the king to be supreme head of the nation, though Christ is the head of the church." The mayor, unconvinced, or, which is the same thing, "convinced against his will," persisted in consigning Mr. Terrill to prison, unless he would give security for his good behaviour, which, as it involved non-attendance at the meeting, he refused to do. The mayor then desired the sergeant to take him to prison. Mr. Terrill, seeing no other way of escape, requested a little time for consideration, which was granted, on his promise to appear at the Tolzey next morning. In the morning, he made his appearance, but the mayor finding it convenient to be absent, he was cleared.

The mayor, having already sent many to prison, declared he would send ten times as many next Sunday. Lord's-day came (the 2d of the third month,) and the meeting was filled early; and the members continued, without going home at all, until the close of the service for the day. Mr. Weeks's people did the same, and Helliar and the constables could not get them out. The mayor sent for two of their principal men, and threatened to be with them in the afternoon. They told him, if he did, he would find them in the path of their duty, waiting upon the Lord. "But the Lord altered the mayor's mind," and he did not go; and as Helliar and his men stayed there, they had rest and peace at Broadmead —only the bishop's men called in, and gave a longing, lingering look.

The two following Lord's-days, it being term-time, Helliar was in London, and the people enjoyed a

temporary cessation from the stirring scenes they had lately experienced.

Mr. Hardcastle and Mr. Weeks were now removed to the King's-bench by *Habeas Corpus*, to try whether their mittimus was according to law; but though, in fact, it was illegal, yet, by influential counsel and perjured evidence, (the mayor sent up his hopeful son Ralph!) they were both remanded as prisoners, with an order to the sheriff, however, that he should provide them better accommodation.

"On the 15th of the third month, the day of the trial at Westminster, the four congregations in Bristol met together, to humble themselves before the Lord, and to seek his face for their two ministers and two brethren. Early in the morning, they assembled in the Castle, the meeting-place of Mr. Thompson deceased. One of each congregation prayed, and then they went round again, so that eight brethren prayed, and a minister concluded that was of another congregation:—from seven in the morning till twelve at noon. This union was much liked by all, being driven together by this universal trouble."

Endeavours were also made to establish *a monthly lecture*, of the united congregations; calculating that the attendance would be more numerous, and therefore more "formidable and terrible to the enemy," and that they would thus "strengthen themselves against the bishop and his abettors" For this purpose they met on the 24th, at Mr. Weeks's house. But Mr. Weeks's people demurred. They feared lest a nearer approach should rather injure than strengthen the union which already subsisted: for example, they

contended for praying for magistrates, irrespective of character; for singing some metrical version of the Psalms, promiscuously with the unconverted, as well as with believers; for limiting the ministry to persons ordained by presbyters; and lastly, they insinuated their apprehensions that the baptists would endeavour to proselyte their best members. In reply, it was agreed, that it was the duty of all to pray for magistrates, but not by unscriptural titles; in relation to singing, three of the congregations were agreed, and some of Mr. Gifford's people; but some could not sing in metre, who might, however, if necessary, stay away, rather than signify their dissent by keeping on their hats. As to the ministry, all were for order, and required a scriptural call: but in the present distress, some thought it their duty to use the best gifts they had, and to hear them as gifted brethren, though not as ministerially called. And in relation to baptism—that interminable bone of contention—their fears were allayed: it was agreed that "none should preach up baptism of believers, and none against it." Thus the ordinance was crucified between them, and baptists and pedobaptists were made friends. Ultimately, the baptized congregations and the independents agreed to form this union; but the presbyterians were still unwilling. On Thursday, the 3d of June, the first monthly lecture was held, according to previous arrangement, at Mr. Thompson's meeting-place in the Castle, "*near the Water-gate.*"

On the 5th of June, Mr. Hardcastle and Mr. Weeks returned from London, and were again consigned to Newgate. Helliar also having returned, the

rest the church had enjoyed the last three or four Sabbaths was again disturbed. On Lord's-day, the 6th, he caused much trouble. In the morning and afternoon, he and his constables made themselves very busy at Mr. Weeks's, pulling and hauling them about, so as altogether to prevent the preaching. And about half-past ten in the morning, Broadmead was visited by the mayor, the sheriffs, and Alderman Crab, accompanied by the sword-bearer and sergeants. Mr. Zephaniah Smith was about to preach; but at the time of this interruption, the people were singing. The mayor commands them to depart; but few heard what he said, and all kept on singing, every one with his book in his hand. Some would courteously refrain if the mayor were close to them; but the singing on all sides so stunned him that he knew not what to do. To avoid the noise, he went down stairs, and there with his officers stayed till the singing was ended. Then, about eleven, he sent up his sergeants, to entreat the people to depart. They were told some would have left before, but they were not allowed. Many then contrived to escape through other houses, but those who passed down stairs were regularly registered by the mayor and his clerk. In the afternoon, Mr. Weeks's people only were visited; and for four succeeding Lord's-days, Helliar being again in London, the churches were altogether unmolested.

By the 18th of July, Helliar had returned, with his appetite for mischief as keen as ever. Before service began, he went in to Broadmead, just to take a survey. After looking round, and making his

observations, he went to the mayor, and beat up for a few aldermen. The mayor first sends his sergeants, who, as usual, command the people to depart, and the people, as usual, persevered in singing, just as though they were deaf to all around them. The enemy leave, with threats. Very shortly they return, reiterate their commands, and are answered by peals of singing. Unsuccessful again, again they are compelled to retire. But about ten o'clock, up comes Mr. Mayor himself, with the sheriffs, Alderman Hicks, the sword-bearer, and sergeants—a most formidable array. Commands as usual, and singing as usual, but not the shadow of obedience. Enraged, the mayor rushes through the people to the table, and seizes hold of Mr. Terrill, who makes no resistance. The mayor consigns him to a sergeant, with a strict charge to secure him. Then, one after another, all were violently ejected. The sergeant held Mr. Terrill fast, fearing he would escape; but, perceiving their irritability, although they insulted him, threatening that now even his estate should not save him, he was, very prudently, quiet as a lamb. In the full expectation of having to convey him to Newgate, they brought him to the mayor; but "the Lord strangely altered the mayor's mind," that for that once he was willing to let him go; but if ever he took him at a meeting again, he would show him no favour! This was the more wondered at, because in the meeting he had expressed his belief that Mr. Terrill was the preacher. From Broadmead, the mayor and his train posted off to Mr. Gifford's, where they met Helliar, who had been performing his part at Mr. Weeks's. In

the afternoon, they had a visit from Mr. Robert Colston, the particulars of which are given in p. 63.

During Mr. Hardcastle's imprisonment, Mr. Terrill usually supplied his place. Consequently, several warrants were out against him, and he would doubtless have been imprisoned with his pastor, had not the officers, some of whom were reluctant agents, purposely avoided seeing him. But Helliar having indicted him for non-attendance at his parish church, he was compelled to appear at the sessions. Waiting at a friend's house, near the hall, with his bondsman, who should pass by, but the "parson of Peter's, called Pledwell, and Heath, of Austin's, with Robert Colston, the informer!" Having caught sight of him, they immediately conferred with the bishop's men, the secretary hastily fetching a constable, with a warrant, to take him before the mayor. Mr. Terrill, on examining the warrant, found it was abortive it being dated on the 27th of August, that day being but the 10th. He therefore told the officer that he had no power to act on that warrant. But the officer, afraid of disobliging the bishop's secretary, requested Mr. Terrill to accompany him to the hall. He did so; but the warrant, instead of being handed to the mayor, was given to Hobson the gaoler, who commanded his under-keeper to take the prisoner to Newgate. Mr. Terrill resisted, saying he was not legally a prisoner. The gaoler replied he was given to him with a warrant. Mr. Terrill reminded him that the warrant was powerless, and bid him read it. He did so, and in anger threw it under his feet. But the under-keeper stuck close to Mr. Terrill, intimating

to a bystander that he must look well to his prisoner. Mr. Terrill, overhearing this, said, "Do you consider me your prisoner? If you do, I'll look to you to be my keeper; and do you keep me, if you think good, or durst, without a warrant." This silenced him, and shortly after he went to the gaoler, and conferred with him. Mr. Terrill, fearing they were contriving another warrant for him, thought it high time to be moving. Just then, the sergeant, who kept the door, left it, and went to the keeper and whispered. Promptly availing himself of this movement, Mr. Terrill intimated to the constables that he wished to leave the hall: but the throng was so great, they could not open the door. They helped him, however, over the hatch, and so he escaped.

On the 2d of September, at a week-day meeting, Helliar, in a state of intoxication, brought constables to the meeting full two hours before the time, and no one was there but an old woman cleaning the room. He withdrew for a time, but returned, with his own man, just as the service was about commencing. Down he sits, and enters into familiar conversation, proposing ensnaring questions. Besides other opprobrious expressions, he called one man "a decimator, and a sequestrator," and kept on with his jeers and his threats, that they could have no service at all. The following Lord's-day (the 5th) he visited them six times; and the mayor came and joined him, but was, happily, just too late.

On the 26th, Helliar visited them, with six or seven of the bishop's men, but to no purpose. He issued his command—the people responded with a

psalm—and he went to another meeting. Then came the mayor, then the sergeants, then Sir John Knight, Sir Robert Yeamans, and Alderman Streamer; but they were disappointed, in not finding the preacher, who had been conveyed away through a trap-door, made like a biffett-bench (a buffét, or cupboard) against a wall in an inclosed pew."

On the 17th of October, finding the place thronged, and experiencing some difficulty in getting up the stairs, Helliar violently assaulted one of the members, and ripped up his cloak. He tried hard to remove him, but he held fast by the rope. Then Helliar seized his hat, and gave it to his man, who took it to Helliar's house, and there it was detained a prisoner, being afterwards applied for in vain.

The new mayor, Sir Robert Cann, was well disposed, and had no taste for the Sunday sports by which his predecessors in office had been so ingloriously distinguished. But on the 24th, he was reluctantly obliged to follow in the wake of Helliar, who that day shamefully maltreated many. He kindly sent his son, Sir William, to intimate that he was coming, and hoped they would voluntarily retire. When he came, he stated that he was unwilling to give them trouble, but was compelled by Helliar, and he hoped they would depart—which they did.

In the afternoon, Helliar went again, and finding a good congregation, could not allow even the most religious aldermen the privilege of worshipping undisturbed. He sent for them to "Wasbrow's" (St. Werburgh's) church. Obedient to his summons—(so unlike the uncouth and unyielding sectaries!)—

Aldermen Hicks and Streamer, having received absolution, sallied forth with the sergeants, on the usual crusade. First they visited Mr. Weeks's, and then Broadmead. The sermon at Broadmead was ended, and Mr. Ellis was reading one of their pastor's admirable letters. He was rudely interrupted by the customary *Oyes! Oyes!* He replied, they would shortly depart, and requested their visitors would take a seat, as they were not then engaged in any act of worship, but only reading a letter. On being interrupted again, he remonstrated, and said he knew of no Act of Parliament against reading a letter. When he had finished, the people rose to depart; but were obliged to pay the customary toll of having their names recorded in the black book. Mr. Ellis was ordered to appear at the Tolzey the next morning, for reading a letter; but when he went the mayor contrived to be absent. Helliar, however, and his men, gave information on oath, that Mr. Ellis did preach or teach. "Herein (say the records,) may be observed the wickedness of Helliar, that so knowingly and wilfully would swear false. This is presumptuous perjury." Sir Robert Cann, mortified that he should be compelled to be at the beck of Helliar, left for London on the 27th.

But the absence of Sir Robert was no benefit to the harassed churches. The deputy mayor, Alderman Lawford, was a man after Helliar's own heart. On the 7th of November, just as Mr. Jenings had begun his sermon, Helliar walks in, looks round, and walks out again. As the people expected, this foreboded no good. Presently they heard a noise in the

street, and found it was occasioned by the approach of the deputy mayor, Alderman Stevens, two sergeants, Helliar's brother-in-law, and his man. As usual, the command to depart was the salutation; and, whether the worthy deputy was willing to magnify his office, or was delighted to hear the tones of his own voice, (so much more mellifluous than the barbarous sectarian singing!) or was willing to commend himself to the influential Mr. Helliar, or whether for some other reason, unknown except to himself, we cannot tell; but it is positively asserted, in the records, that the aforesaid "Alderman Lawford commanded us, in the king's name, to depart, about *forty times*, but the people kept singing, and did not depart. Then they go round about searching, and taking names—men, women, and maids, that they kept us to near twelve o'clock, and then the people rose and departed."

In the afternoon they were worse troubled. Helliar was very quick upon them, and established himself before they began, searching and scrutinizing every part. On their beginning a psalm, he went down, and sent for Alderman Olive. In the interim, he examined very attentively, a room below, in which the young men exercised every Monday evening. Then he attempted to return up stairs; but the stairs were so crowded, that he could not. To be revenged, he pulled one man by the cloak "till it cracked;" and so violently attacked a woman, that, in her consternation she cried out, "*Will you murder me?*" He struck another with his staff, and had she not turned aside her head, the blow might have been

fatal; as it was, her arm was much injured. Then attacking a youth, he "broke his head;" and having thus thinned the crowd, he made his way up. Presently Alderman Olive arrived, and he and Helliar, and several others, rushed up to the table, and insisted on the people's ceasing their singing and taking their departure. But they might as well have commanded the wind not to blow. Then they sent several to Bridewell, and Mr. Dickenson, after snatching his Bible, and flinging it to a distance, to Newgate. After this, they very rudely assailed the women, and took down their names. At three o'clock, they went to Mr. Weeks's, and dispersed them. Shortly after, they returned and sent several to Bridewell, and stayed so long, that preaching was omitted, and the service was closed by a short prayer, and the reading of a letter from their pastor, "showing the nature of true faith, and why faith must purify the heart." But they were again disturbed, and obliged to depart abruptly.

In the evening, Mr. Dickenson was examined by Alderman Olive. Helliar swore falsely many things against him, and he was consigned to Newgate until the sessions, to be held in nine weeks time. This examination was at a tavern, and while Helliar, Olive, and Lawford were drinking and devising mischief, the prisoner was kept waiting on the pavement.

On the 13th of November (Saturday) a grand consultation was held at the Three Tuns Tavern in Corn Street, as to the mode of procedure to be adopted on the following day. Sir Robert Yeamans

"a great wine drinker," Helliar, the zealous church-warden of St. James's, and Alderman Olive were the council. Helliar prepared warrants, Yeamans signed them, and the chief constable was commanded to attend with his men. Having completed their arrangements to their entire satisfaction, they sat down to drink, and continued drinking until Helliar was unable to reach home without the assistance of two men.

The Sabbath came, and with it the customary annoyance. The valiant persecutors arrived when the place was about half full, and fastened the doors to prevent others from entering, and those present were commanded to disperse. Mr. Jenings, who was about to preach, quietly withdrew into another house. Helliar looked wistfully at his vacant seat, and appeared greatly disappointed at his absence, as he had a warrant in readiness. He had also a new warrant against Mr. Terrill, signed by Mr. Deputy Lawford, as soon as the mayor left the city. The people commence singing — Sir Robert Yeamans orders proclamation to be made—*Oyes! Oyes!* and the 46th psalm produces more sound than harmony —Mr. Ellis especially is arrested and Mr. Clark. They were threatened with Newgate; but that was deferred, and they were ordered to appear at the Tolzey the next day, each being surety for the other. Three others also were under a similar obligation; and one young man, a stranger, was sent to Bridewell until the next day. Then the people dispersed, Alderman Yeamans threatening what he would do if he found them there in the afternoon. To prevent

their attendance, the constables were ordered to secure the doors; but no sooner were Helliar and the alderman gone, than they went to dinner, and quickly returned and filled the place, and were undisturbed.

The next morning the offenders appeared at the Tolzey. Helliar was their accuser; and when the alderman would have been satisfied with sureties to appear at the sessions, he instigated them to require sureties for good behaviour in the mean time. These they refused to provide, and remonstrated with the aldermen for their unneighbourliness, in imprisoning their neighbours for waiting on God, having nothing to allege against them in any other matter; and told them, that at the dictation of "that debauched fellow Helliar," they were going to the extremity of the law, not allowing them the favour the justices would allow to felons. But all was of no use. Unless they would conform, to prison they must go. At length, at the suggestion of some friend, who entreated the aldermen not to be so rash, they were remanded, to consider of it, until Wednesday. Then they appeared again, their determination the same. Accordingly, their mittimus was made out, they were conveyed to Newgate, and Helliar and the aldermen adjourned to dinner and wine at Helliar's house.

The next Lord's-day, the 21st, they were undisturbed, the persecutors being themselves in a dilemma. Helliar and one Robins, the steward of the city, "a very debauched man also," had been asserting that the parliament were about to deprive those cities of their charters that allowed of conventicles. Robins

said he heard his Lordship (the bishop,) say so. In consequence, inquiry was instituted in London, both of the Commons and the Lords; and the friends were assured it was altogether untrue. They were also desired to write to Robins, to know if he could prove that his Lordship of Bristol had wrote down so; for if not, he and Helliar should be sent for up to London, and called to account, for spreading false news, and belying the parliament. The letter from London was sent to Mr. Ellis, in prison, on the Saturday, who immediately sent his man with it to Robins, and required an answer. This paralyzed them. They immediately went to the Three Tuns, where they plotted and drank till they were completely intoxicated. But the parliament being prorogued, they were not called to account.

But the salutary impression, if any were made, was of short continuance; for on the 28th, Helliar was as busy as ever, all the morning, at Mr. Weeks's, Broadmead, and Mr. Gifford's. He and Alderman Hicks were again at Broadmead before two o'clock, when they withdrew to Mr. Weeks's: "by which means, (say the records,) we had a fine breathing, and comfortable opportunity, and ended all in peace." Before, however, they were all gone, Helliar came again and created a riot, with which he had the assurance to charge the church. Several were struck and knocked down, and the boys hooted Helliar through the streets. He endeavoured to secure the preacher, "but the Lord hid him."

These interruptions were regularly continued every time the church assembled. But one Lord's-day, in

December, Helliar seemed inclined to put about, and proceed on a new tack. He invited a young man, John Tucker, one of Mr. Weeks's people, to dinner with him, and, after much conversation, intimated, that if the congregation would change their hours, and not meet at the time of divine service at church, he would not trouble them. In consequence of this intimation, Mr. Weeks's people altered their times of meeting to eleven and three; which displeased the other congregations. They met at Mr. Ellis's, to decide what should be done, and agreed that if the king or the parliament had made such a proposition, or had promised them peace on such a condition, they would readily have acceded; but they were resolute against coming to any terms with "a wicked informer," through whom, for the last fifteen months, they had been disturbed, abused, fined, distrained, and imprisoned. This was the unanimous decision of Mr. Thompson's, Mr. Hardcastle's, and Mr. Gifford's people. Still, the presbyterians resolved to yield to the enemy, at the expense of their friends. In fact, for some reason or other, they were evidently preparing to dissolve the union professedly subsisting, altogether.

Notwithstanding these fears, however, the church at Broadmead had some rest. On the 19th of December, they write, "It pleased the Lord that we had peace all the day; the like we had not had many months before. Praise be to the Lord, who alone took care of us, when we were in our low estate, and the meeting grown very poor and lean, through fines, imprisonment, and constant worrying of us every day,

that we had no rest." On the following Lord's-day, the 26th, they had again to record the same merciful privilege.

But these favours were too good to last—a drop of cold water in a sandy desert. About ten o'clock, "on the 2d of the eleventh month," (Jan. 1676,) Helliar and the bishop's secretary, coachman, and butler, made their appearance at Broadmead. They had been to Mr. Weeks's, but were too early, and therefore, not to lose time, visited the other churches. Mr. Jenings had been preaching, and the people were then singing. Mr. Terrill also was there; and though he had latterly kept himself rather retired, on account of the numerous warrants out against him, and when present at the meetings sat where he could not be seen, he was now willing to be recognized. And when Helliar saw him in his usual place, he turned back, whispered to his servant, and sent him for Alderman Olive. In the interim, Helliar and the bishop's secretary walked up and down, viewing the people, and, with evident complacency, bestowing unusual attention on Mr. Terrill, as though now they were sure of him. But, as the alderman did not come immediately, not to waste time, they took an excursion to Mr. Gifford's meeting, and reminded *them* of old times. On their return, with Alderman Olive, expecting surely to have taken away Mr. Terrill, and sent him to prison, to his pastor, they found he was gone. Some of the friends had persuaded him to withdraw into the usual place of retreat, and the alderman was greatly enraged. In a violent passion, he commanded the people to be gone;

but they persisted in singing, and would not go. Then he vehemently attacked Mr. Dickenson, whom, a few weeks before, he had sent to Newgate, but afterwards released, and who had since then been made a sworn constable, and threatened to fine him £5. But Mr. Dickenson remonstrated, and said it was not an unlawful assembly. Then Olive laid violent hands on him, pulled him out of his seat, and commanded him to fulfil his office—meaning that he should disperse the people. He replied, he was sworn to keep the king's peace; that none of them had broken it; but that if they did, he would take them into custody. Then, having taken the names of those present, they went to Mr. Weeks's, and compelled them to disperse.

On the 4th of January, the deputies from the churches met, to hold their quarterly fast. But, because the baptists and independents would not alter their hours of meeting on Lord's-days, the presbyterians formally broke the union, by refusing to send their two deputies—a breach the more painful, because it was occasioned by a compromise between one of their young members and Helliar, after dinner; "and after all a lying compact, as last Lord's-day's experience might convince them."

On the 12th, five of the members were discharged from their imprisonment; but Mr. Hardcastle still remained, his second six months not having expired. This discharge was procured by counsel, in opposition to Helliar, who proposed to frame a new indictment against them, for a riot. But the counsel told him it was more than he could do by law.

On Saturday, the 15th, "that troubler of our Israel, Helliar," went to Sir Robert Cann, the mayor, and to the alderman of James's ward, and laid informations against Broadmead and Mr. Gifford's meetings. "As for that at James's Back, (said Helliar,) I have nothing to say: they submit, and keep their words, and do not meet until after ten o'clock." Helliar then demanded that, on the morrow, the alderman (Crump) should attend in person. He replied, he should send the warrants by the constables. Helliar said that would be of no service; the constables would not execute them; for many of them did not go to church themselves. The alderman told him not to concern himself about that—the constables would do their duty. Helliar blustered, and threatened what he would do; and ordered the mayor's clerk to have the warrants made out immediately. Then the mayor and the alderman sent privately to Mr. Terrill, to request them to alter their time, and not meet until ten. Had this request been made spontaneously by the mayor and Alderman Crump, they would have complied with it; but as it was occasioned by the interference of Helliar, and to gratify his whim, they would not consent, but met as they had been accustomed to do. They were the more inclined to oblige the mayor and Alderman Crump, because of their friendly feeling, and because they heard that Helliar had two writs out against the Alderman, for not uniting with him as often as he wished, in disturbing the meetings. And though they assembled at the usual hour, not being willing to gratify Helliar, yet, from respect to the magistrates, they did not commence

their public worship until ten o'clock. And after all Helliar's threats, for some reason or other, he did not molest them. "So (say they) we had rest all day. Praise be to the Lord."

Mr. Hardcastle's second term of imprisonment—six lunar months—expired on the 23d; and he would not continue, in deference to "the adversary," another hour. Having been imprisoned that day six months, between nine and ten in the morning, at that hour he claimed his liberation, and went forthwith to the meeting, and preached. His imprisonment seems to have inspired him with courage and holy resolution. "Brother Terrill (say they) having commenced with prayer, before he had done our pastor came in, and preached, and was quiet; and so in the afternoon. Praise be to the Lord, that discouraged the adversary, and gave such a spirit of courage to our pastor, under all his trouble, time after time, not only from foes, but friends, with arguments for prudence so called. But he accounted his still persevering, with Daniel, in open duty, the best policy and safety."

The next Lord's-day, Mr. Hardcastle persevered in preaching, and yet they were unmolested. This they considered "a token for good"—an earnest of further liberty. In publishing their prayer-meeting preparatory to the Lord's-supper, they also announced two additions—the fruits of persecution: "one of the hearers that was imprisoned," and "one of the hearers whose goods were distrained for meeting."

On the 12th of March, the bishop returns from Dorsetshire, sends to inform Sir Robert Cann, and piously exhorts him to disturb the Castle meeting.

The mayor sent constables to acquaint them of the bishop's friendly interference, and to request them to disperse. Having delivered their message, the officers peaceably retired.

Several more now joined the church, and were baptized in the river Froome, "by brother Terrill's house." One of them, Mr. Robertson, seventy years of age, "very aged, very feeble, weak, and short-breathed," was earnestly advised not to be baptized; "whereupon he was in some fear, and would put off. But being persuaded it was a Christian's duty, some advised him to trust in the Lord for strength to yield obedience to his command: so he was resolved not to tarry longer, and was baptized, and received no harm."

The church appear to have been somewhat concerned that Mr. Hardcastle should remain so long unordained, and "a providence presenting itself," they wished to avail themselves of it. Five London ministers—Kiffen, Deane, Fitten, Cox, and Moreton, coming to Trowbridge, to settle some dispute in a church there, the pastor holding unsound doctrine, or "new notions, contrary to the general reception of sound and orthodox men." All considered this to be a favourable opportunity to invite them to Bristol, to ordain their pastor. He himself concurred; but important duties at home prevented these good men from complying with their desire.

An arrangement was now entered into with the church in the Castle, for a monthly exchange of preachers; and on the 31st of the tenth month, (December) this arrangement was commenced, in the

morning—Mr. Hardcastle preaching for them, and Mr. Wey at Broadmead.

In January, 1677, or, as they describe it, "the eleventh month, 1676," after a year's respite, the troubles of the church recommenced. Several of the members, both of Broadmead and Mr. Weeks's place, had writs of excommunication against them. The worship at Broadmead was undisturbed; but on the 7th, two sergeants were sent to Mr. Weeks's. On the 14th, the bishop again gives the mayor a gentle hint, who sends his constables, but not his sergeants, to Mr. Gifford's: they went, just to show themselves, and departed.

On the 19th of the fourth month, Bishop Guy Carelton, the zealous informer, apprises Sir John Knight, by his secretary, of an obnoxious meeting in the Castle. Sir John was with the mayor, at Temple church. The bishop's business not admitting of delay, even the sacredness of the church was violated. In rushed the secretary, dashed open the pew door, and while Sir John was on his knees, delivers the letter from the bishop. Sir John, in defiance of all decorum, conferring with the mayor, dispatches four sergeants to disperse Mr. Wey's meeting. The sergeants not only executing their commission, but turning informers, six whom they saw there were convicted upon the Conventicle Act. On the 24th, by a similar process, the church scene excepted, a similar disturbance was followed by similar results. Industrious, energetic bishop!

From Guy Carelton, we turn to Guy Fawkes—from the exploder of dissent to the exploder of the church—

the one *ex officio*, in broad day light, the other privately and in disguise—both plotters of mischief, however, and distinguished for deeds of darkness. The 5th of November, being a leisure day, while one Guy was denouncing the other, and the pope himself, in the very spirit of popery, the members of Broadmead were assembled for prayer, preparatory to their commemoration of the death of the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

Much as the church disapproved of the national Establishment, and lightly as they esteemed her Lord Bishop of Bristol, they promptly and resolutely expressed their disapprobation of threats of personal violence against his lordship. One of their members having been guilty of this, they immediately expelled him, not even visiting him in his imprisonment, he being considered an evil doer; and not only were the ways of the Lord evil spoken of, but his sin was charged upon them. On his release, he absented himself from the meeting, having obtained his discharge on a promise of attending at the college. It appears, that in a state of excitement, he had scandalized the bishop, and threatened to knock his teeth down his throat!—a threat, however injurious to the bishop, utterly useless to dissenters; for had it been carried into execution, we fear his Right Reverence would not have refrained from "biting and devouring" the sheep of Christ's fold.

"On the 28th of February, 1678,(it is recorded,) our aged brother, Robert Simpson departed this life, in the 85th year of his age. He was interred in Philip's yard, at the back door of the meeting-house there,

called a church. He could read the smallest printed Bible without spectacles. A week before he died, as he lay upon his bed, he told brother Rieves the Lord had been preaching to him better than a hundred sermons. Brother Rieves asked him what it was he said. He had been meditating (as he lay a little on his couch in the day time,) about the Israelite's servant in Exod. xxi. 5, 6, that had served his master six years, he was to go free the seventh. But if he said he loved his master, &c., that he will not go out free, then his ear was to be bored to the door-post with an awl, and he should serve him for ever. '*Now* (said brother Simpson,) *I have served Christ so long, and I love my Master still; and if I were to live a hundred years more, I would not leave my Master!* And upon my resolution, (my thoughts,) *the Lord came in upon my soul, and said I should be his servant for ever!*"

It was at this time, that the singular application from Mr. Jesse's church (alluded to in p. 68) was made: to which we just revert, for the purpose of stating, that though Mr. Hardcastle could not obtain a regular dismission from *that* church, he had a letter of commendation from ten ministers in London, all pastors of churches, "*of whom Dr. Owen was one.*" The certificate from Mr. Hardcastle's former church (who would not condescend to write a regular application) is quite a curiosity.

"These are to certify the congregation in Bristol, that the bearers hereof, namely, John Mason and Christopher Booth, are messengers appointed by the church at London, of which Mr. Thomas Hardcastle

is a member, and chosen an elder, to inquire of you the reasons of withholding Mr. Thomas Hardcastle from them, as they are informed being neither a member nor a minister regularly called among you, and the church at London standing in great need of him. To which we do in the name of the church subscribe our names,

William Nuttall, } Deacons.
John Buckmaster, }

Signed at London,
the 31st of the 1st month, 1678.

As we have already intimated, death decided between them, and removed Mr. Hardcastle from the church militant to the church triumphant, not in August, (as inserted by mistake,) but on Lord's-day, the 7th of September, about three o'clock in the morning.

The expenses of Mr. Hardcastle's funeral (at which no wine was given, but bread to the poor, and gloves and hat-bands to the ministers that went by the hearse) were defrayed by the members of the church, who, with the assistance of some of the hearers, liberally presented the widow with a hundred and fifty pounds. "Praise be to the Lord, who stirred up the hearts of his people so willingly to give, to the glory of his name, and for the better support of the widow and fatherless. But of the Lord's own have we given him."

The 15th of "8ber," (October) the church kept a day of humiliation for the death of their pastor, and concluded to reserve the dwelling-house for another. They also met on the 5th of November, in remembrance of their destitute condition. On this occasion, they sung a long hymn "composed and brought

into the congregation, for its edification, by brother E [dward] T [errill.]"

The church now naturally turned their attention to a new pastor. Among others, Mr. Fownes, of London, was suggested; but as a previous application had been made to Mr. Brown, of Westmacote, before the pastorship of Mr. Hardcastle, and as it was understood that he was now at liberty, it was considered but right to renew the invitation. He was a considerable scholar; but the church at Westmacote were unwilling he should leave them. Mr. Fownes was then applied to, and the application was successful. He had been educated at Cambridge, and afterwards had a living at High Wycombe, in Buckinghamshire, which he voluntarily resigned before the Restoration. For some time, although he preached occasionally, he was not permanently settled. He is stated to have been a lecturer in Lothbury, and in 1678, he succeeded Mr. Palmer at Pinner's Hall.

Mr. Fownes visited the church in June 1679, and on the 15th of the following month, he received a unanimous call at a church-meeting, when, "as it were, a cloud of naked hands were erected towards the ceiling of the room," expressive of the desire of the church. Mr. Fownes considered this a call in providence, but required a little time for deliberation. On the 16th of September, he visited them again, when the invitation was renewed; "and (say the records) he owned our call to be the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ unto him, and therefore was willing, as the Lord should help him, to serve the church while he lived." On the 23d of October, he

came to reside in Bristol. At this time there were 166 members, 33 being pedobaptists.

In the interim between the death of Mr. Hardcastle and the election of Mr. Fownes, three new deaconnesses were chosen, and set apart by fasting and prayer. They were all above sixty years of age, and laid themselves under an obligation not to marry. On their signifying their acceptance of the office, their duties were stated to them in the following particulars:—"1. To visit the sick, the sisters in an especial manner, to see what they need. 2. To visit sick brethren also, and therefore some conceive may be the reason why they must be sixty years of age, that none occasion may be given. 3. To take care that their wants may be supplied, and therefore to make reports of their condition to the elders and deacons. 4. To speak a word to their souls, as occasion required, for support or consolation, to build them up in a lively faith in Jesus Christ. 5. Some think it their duty to attend the sick, (as nurses, probably;) and if so, then they are to be maintained by the church."

On the 22d of April, 1679, the church "agreed to pay one half with brother Gifford's people, to buy a burying place for ourselves—a garden in Redcross-lane—that we might bury our dead, without the ceremonies of the parish parsons in their yard." This purchase was not concluded till the ninth of October. It has been since enlarged, but is still too confined. About four years before, a similar attempt was made "by the other congregations to seek for and buy a

burying-place for all the Separates to bury their dead." But it was not accomplished.

In 1680, another persecution commenced—"the *ninth*." About the middle of the year, Broadmead was visited by informers, George Helliar, (the notorious Helliar's brother-in-law) and the bishop's apparitor, while Mr. Fownes was preaching. As to George Helliar, he had been lately imprisoned for speaking contemptuously of the mayor, and abusing the watch. He was, therefore, under the necessity of signalizing himself in the good cause, were it only to atone for his former misdemeanour, and regain a character. Accordingly, the very day of his liberation, he went to Mr. Weeks's meeting, while Mr. Young (formerly a clergyman at Brislington) was preaching, and commanded him to come down. But the informer being intoxicated, and Mr. Young sober and prudent, he managed to make his escape.

On the 8th day of the fifth month, George Helliar visited Broadmead, with the bishop's apparitor, and two sergeants. Mr. Fownes was praying, and was scarcely allowed to conclude before they presented him with a warrant from Sir Robert Cann and Alderman Olive. Mr. Fownes observed his name was not in the warrant. Nevertheless they seized him, and would have taken him off if they could. "If you will sit down (said Mr. Fownes,) and let me alone till I have done, I will go with you." No—nothing would do, but he must go immediately. A friend then prevailed with the sergeants to retire a little. Then George Helliar ran for another warrant, and

Mr. Fownes was prevailed on to go in another direction. The warrant was forthcoming, but no minister was to be found, and after much abuse, Helliar retired in a rage.

On Lord's day, the 11th, the same parties went again, after they had been to the Castle meeting, and Mr. Gifford's. Spying the pastor, Helliar in an ecstasy, cries out, "There's Mr. Fownes again!" He was preaching, and, notwithstanding their clamorous interruptions, he persevered. They took down the names of many, that they might be fined; but being unable to accomplish more, they went to Mr. Weeks's, and in the afternoon they closed the doors of the Castle meeting, and would not allow any to enter. During the week they flattered themselves they had secured Mr. Fownes near the Tolzey; but on a closer examination, they found they had arrested an innocent stranger! "Thus the Lord showed us their design, and preserved our minister." The interruptions were now very frequent, not only at Broadmead, but at Mr. Giffords, Mr. Wey's, and Mr. Weeks's. The conduct to be pursued under all probable circumstances was regularly arranged, and as regularly adhered to in any emergency. And the churches united in defraying necessary expences.

On the 31st of October, the conference was changed into a prayer-meeting, in consideration of the evil designs and endeavours of many to undermine the cause of Christ in the nation. It was held on Tuesday evenings, from five to eight o'clock.

In 1681, commenced what is called the *tenth* persecution. On the 20th of November, four or five

constables entered Broadmead, and commanded Mr. Fownes to desist from preaching, and the congregation to disperse. Mr. Fownes asked who the man was that issued that command. Mr. Terrill said, a constable. Mr. Fownes asked by what authority he acted, and whether he had any warrant. He answered they had. Mr. Fownes said they had no power to execute any warrant on the Lord's-day, except for felony or a breach of the peace. Tilly said that was a breach of the peace. Mr. Fownes said they were met to worship the Lord, and asked Tilly if he saw any armed, or whether he believed, in his conscience, (an informer's *conscience!* simple Mr. Fownes!) they were there with any such intent. Tilly said they must go to church canonically established; and then commanded some to pull Mr. Fownes down; and because he would not come down, he asked for his name. Mr. Fownes said his name was well known, but he did not tell him, though not ashamed of either his name or his work. Mr. Fownes speaking thus boldly, and as one undaunted, Mr. Terrill advised him to proceed with the preaching, which he did; and seeing so many people there, the informers took down some names and departed.

The next Lord's-day, after evening service, the brethren were desired to stay and consult on what should be done in the present emergency. Especially as there was then a new warrant against Mr. Fownes, for living in a corporation; and above a hundred in the city were recently indicted for not going to church, upon several statutes of Queen Elizabeth, (that paragon of benignity and mercy to tender

consciences!) and many had their goods distrained on the Conventicle Act. To prevent the access of informers, and the seizure of their pastor, it was suggested that the doors should be shut. Thirteen objected to close them at all; five were for having them open on Lord's-days; and twenty for keeping them fast. It was then resolved to "turn the upper stairs, and come in at the left door."

On the 4th of December, the informers renewed their attack. Tilly commanded several to pull Mr. Fownes down; but they would not, nor would Mr. Fownes condescend to come down, especially as they produced no warrant. Then Watkins, with great fury rushed upon him; but Mr. Fownes remonstrated, and said none of the magistrates would do so. Watkins then went for an alderman; and Mr. Fownes told the others, that if they would sit down and be quiet, they should hear what *rebellion* they taught the people. They would not sit, but they stood; and Mr. Fownes proceeded to preach from Heb. iv. 14—16; and afterwards concluded with prayer, being about half an hour in the whole. Then the people went down the stairs that were turned. Tilly, in amazement, calls after Mr. Fownes to come the other way; which he was not polite enough to do. Then they would have pursued him that way to take him; but he was conveyed away, under the meeting, into a neighbour's house.

On Tuesday se'nnight, the 13th, John Helliar, (*the* Helliar, as he might be called, by way of distinction) who had come home the evening before, went with Capt. Edward Arundell, and his lieutenant, and a

number of constables, to the meeting-house on James's-back, expecting to hear a lecture. Helliar ordered the people to disperse, pulled down the pulpit —(the prattling box, as he called it,)—and the pews, which, as fast as they could, the labourers he had hired demolished. Then came in the rabble and boys, whom Helliar encouraged to help, saying he would send up their names to the king, and they should have £20 apiece. So about fourteen labourers and the rabble continued until late at night, breaking down the galleries, demolishing the windows, and carrying away the plunder, to the amount of more than a hundred pounds. The next morning, they broke open the door of the adjoining house, and carried away the remainder of the broken stuff and timber to Bridewell. In the afternoon, Helliar and Captain Arundell, with the constables and workmen, went to Mr. Gifford's meeting-house, broke open the door, pulled down the pulpit and seats, destroyed the windows, and carried all away. Then, being in the humour, they went to the quakers' and did the same, and carried all away—afterwards appraising the whole at £2 9s. 6d., valuing Mr. Weeks's at twenty-two shillings, the quakers' at fifteen, and Mr. Gifford's at twelve shillings and sixpence!

But Broadmead and the meeting in the Castle, where Mr. Stackhouse then preached, were not thus plundered, not being included in the warrant. The pretence for rifling the other places was a warrant from the king's deputy lieutenants, to make a distress for £5 laid on all meeting-houses, as a fine for a soldier in arms, at the last muster, when Lord

Herbert was in the city. It was therefore agreed by the Broadmead church, if a warrant were produced from three of the deputy lieutenants, to pay the five pounds, and this was told to Capt. Arundell, Alderman Crump, and Helliar. The Castle people did the same. The next day information of the warrant was sent to Broadmead, and the fine paid.

Notwithstanding this submission, however, Broadmead did not escape. On the 15th, about half an hour before Mr. Jenings had done preaching, young Olive, the alderman's son, and three or four constables rushed up in great haste. Mr. Jenings was requested to cease preaching, and was conveyed away secretly. Olive hearing no one preaching, pushed through the people and commanded them to disperse; and a rabble of boys followed close at his heels, expecting to share in the spoils. But the people sat still. Then Olive roared out, as distinctly as he could, in a state of intoxication, *Oyes! Oyes! Oyes!* But the people continued their full time, and then departed. The difficulty now was to remove Olive and the constables, who seemed inclined to stay, and intent on mischief. After much altercation the members prevailed, and locked the doors fast.

But on Lord's-day, the 18th, the enemy succeeded in capturing Mr. Fownes. And no wonder, considering their combined strength. All the three powers—civil, ecclesiastical, and military—were engaged on the memorable occasion. There were Sir Robert Yeamans, mayor's officers, and sergeants; Sir John Knight, a sheriff, and a deputy lieutenant; Mr. Rumsey the town clerk; the bishop's secretary and register;

with an assemblage of the mobility in the rear. Sir Robert and the sheriff command Mr. Fownes to surrender. Mr. Fownes remonstrates. Sir Robert, valiantly, by the aid of a sergeant, forces his way to the pulpit, opens the door, and in great fury says, "*Sirrah, come down!*" What could the poor man do? He came down, but, in yielding to authority, expressed his opinion that such language might have been forborne. Sir Robert then sent him to Newgate, by a sergeant. Then, stationing themselves at different doors, the gentle invaders take down the names of the congregation, as they leave, sending several to Bridewell, with some from Mr. Weeks's, who were afterwards committed to Newgate, because they would not engage to desert the meetings. Helliar arrested one member, and sent him to Bridewell, merely for entering a room under the meeting-house, where the young members had been worshipping—there being at the time nothing objectionable—reading, singing, praying, or preaching.

The following Thursday, the 22d, notwithstanding the precautionary payment of the fine, in compliance with a warrant from Sir John Knight, Capt. Arundell, &c. Helliar and his people rifled and plundered the meeting house—pulling down pulpit and pews at their pleasure. One of them brought in a tankard of strong beer, and sitting down on the pulpit seat, drank to his companions, and a health to the king; and after this overflow of good fellowship and loyalty, he sang songs, smoked tobacco, and jeered the poor people until it was time to leave.

On the 25th, the same serio-comic performances

were reacted. Helliar and the keeper of the Sun alehouse introduced three tankards of strong drink, which they placed on the table. Helliar, having in vain endeavoured to engage Mr. Terrill in conversation, drank his health, and required him to pledge him in return. "I don't use to drink here," said Mr. Terrill. "Then I will," replied Helliar; and he and his companions began to drink one to another, as though they were in an alehouse, and called for something to eat, which was immediately sent for. By this time, several more members came in, one of whom Helliar called cousin, and desired him and his companions to depart. They not obeying, he charged them with being afraid of Mr. Terrill, lest he should excommunicate them,—"or who is it, (says he,) that does pronounce church censures here?" He then commanded them to disperse; but no regard being paid to him, he and his companions go down stairs, send for a smith, nail up both the doors, and start for Mr. Gifford's meeting. Thus imprisoned in their own place, the members made the best of their time. First they sung a psalm, then Mr. Ellis prayed, and Mr. Terrill preached from 2 Tim. ii. 12. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." In about an hour, the enemy returned, broke open one of the doors, and took down the names. Being asked why he nailed them up, Helliar replied, "To take you into custody; for though you be stubborn, and would not go, we are not to be hindered in our work." Again he commanded them to depart, but expecting, if they did, they would be kept out in the

afternoon, they preferred to stay. Then Helliar, fearing his dinner would be spoiled, began to be angry, and clamorous, and rude; and lest the members should be charged with a riot, Mr. Ellis desired him to go first, and see if they would not follow, which they did. Then a guard of the night watch was ordered, with their bills, to prevent the people assembling in the afternoon. Helliar urged his cousin, Mr. Tyler, to dine with him, saying, that if he refused, he would arrest him, and procure his conviction. While at dinner, (as though the lion were ever remiss in pursuing his prey!) some jackall or other sends for Helliar to follow up the sport. Broadmead and James's-back meeting-houses being barricadoed, the people assembled in the street; and Helliar had the assurance to desire Mr. Tyler to accompany him to disturb the other meetings: but being told he would rather go to prison, he dispensed with his services. Mr. Terrill effected an entrance into Broadmead, and after him several others, the watchmen beginning to be weary; but they followed them, and vigilantly marked their proceedings. On a concerted signal, the people began, by singing the 46th psalm, each looking in a book. Then they sang the 36th, and by that time it was time to separate. In the meantime, Helliar had been visiting Mr. Gifford's and the quakers' meetings, and had sent Mr. Dickenson to Bridewell, who being brought before Alderman Olive, was that evening committed to Newgate.

On account of the peculiar circumstances in which the church was placed, the conference had lately been discontinued, and a prayer-meeting substituted. At a

meeting of this description, on the 26th of December, Mr. Davis, one of the members, was praying, when Helliar and his men came in. Without allowing him to conclude, they took him at once before the mayor, who commanded his appearance the next morning. Mr. Terrill, on his arrival, was told what had taken place, but, nothing daunted, spoke from Ephes. vi. 12, after which one of the members prayed; then another member, a Mr. Warren, was about to conclude, when they were disturbed by the constables thundering furiously at the door, though it was only latched. They vociferated their commands as usual, and young Ralph Olive (then no constable, but for his officiousness made one three days after,) ran for the mayor. Immediately a host were on the alert—Sir Thomas Earle, Sheriff Lane, Sheriff Knight, the town-clerk, Captain Arundell, the bishop's secretary, and several sergeants. The mayor was very angry, and said, "This is for nothing but to oppose the government." "No, (said Mr. Terrill,) may it please your worship, God forbid we should do any such thing; but, in obedience to the Lord, we had for many years used to meet here, to seek his face." Then their names were taken down, and some desired the sheriffs to take them into custody, which, however, they refused to do unless they were delivered to them as prisoners at their gaol. Then it was proposed to lock them up all night, men, women, and children; but Mr. Terrill remonstrated against such an outrage on common decency. The females were then discharged; and the brethren proposed to go, on condition of appearing next morning. But no, that

was not to be allowed. Young Ralph Olive made himself very busy, and officiously advised the mayor not to allow the members to be bound for each other, unless they would give security for good behaviour. Sheriff Knight said to his colleague, "Have but a good mind to it, as the king said to me, and the business will be done." Then, swelling again at the thought of his intimacy with royalty, he added, "The king said to me, *Sheriff, let the prison be the prison!*" After a good deal of consultation, thirteen were sent to Bridewell, and six to Newgate. Next morning, they were brought before the mayor, who required security, not only for their appearance at the sessions, but also for their good behaviour in the meantime. The former they were willing to give, but not the latter. They had counsel, who argued, from the smallness of the fine, that the offence could not have been contemplated as a breach of the peace; and it was thought the mayor would have yielded, but unhappily, just at that moment, in came the lord bishop, and whispered the mayor; and immediately the scale preponderated against them—justice being as nothing against the whisper of a bishop! Accordingly, in deference to these "pious breathings," a mittimus was made out for nineteen, four of whom were Mr. Gifford's members.

On Thursday, the 29th, the members who were at liberty were prevented from entering the meeting-house, the enemy having taken possession, as they said, for the king. They tore down the seats and burnt them, and continued drinking till they lay along the floor like swine after a fatiguing journey.

The church retired to a member's house by "Philip's grave-yard door," and Mr. Jenings preached to them.

The prisoners in Newgate, constituting, as they contended, one family, determined to hold a meeting for fasting and prayer. The fasting, perhaps, might have been allowed, but prayer in Newgate was out of all character. Besides, Mr. Fownes had the temerity to preach, and the people the still more astonishiug assurance to sing the 46th psalm. On this, who should send to the mayor, but the renowned George Helliar, a prisoner for debt! Down came the sheriff, sergeants, artillery men, &c. &c. The sheriff, in a great rage, stormed at the keeper, and threatened to dismiss him; declared there should be no conventicles there; and took the names of two or three visitors. Mr. Terrill, seeing the sheriff in such a rage, said, "The law allows a family, with four more, to meet, and we, being but one family, may meet." So, effectually to counteract this gregarious inclination, they were ordered to be secured in separate rooms. Capt. Arundell, also, must needs aid and abet, which induced Mr. Terrill to tell him that it was illegal to imprison them for praying. Arundell maintained it was not, and plucking the Act out of his pocket, endeavoured to prove his assertion, but the Act not suiting their purpose, they went away in a great rage.

The new year commenced inauspiciously. On the 1st of January, 1682, Lord's-day, the members who were at liberty were shut out of their meeting-house; and the "window-leaves" were demolished by the rabble, encouraged by their superiors.

On the 11th of January, it being quarter sessions, the prisoners were ordered to the Guildhall. They were twenty-five in number. They engaged two Bristol and two London counsellors, or, as they describe them, three counsellors and a barrister, with two attorneys. There were on the bench, in solemn conclave, the mayor, Sir Robert Yeamans, Sir Richard Crump, Aldermen Olive and Hicks, Sir Robert Cann, Sir Richard Hart, and to crown all—a power behind the throne greater than the throne itself—THE LORD BISHOP. These, with the amiable town-clerk, were for continuing the rebels in prison. But ultimately, counsel succeeded in obtaining their discharge, on payment of the fees, and giving security to appear from day to day. Good Mr. Fownes, however, was still detained.

The next morning a meeting of the church was held to decide what should be done. The emancipated prisoners were for boldly meeting as usual, though the members of the other meetings had deserted their places, and met privately. Only the quakers persevered; for when locked out of their meeting-house, they met "in the long entry and court" adjoining. The majority were for meeting at different houses, and ultimately this was acceeded to for the present.

On Wednesday, the 19th, they met at Mr. Fownes's, formerly Mr. Ewins's, in the Castle. By some means the enemy were apprised of it; and besides constables, "Captain Arundell, the bishop's register, with Parson Heath," condescended to perform the honourable part of eavesdroppers. But, as prayer does not consist

in vociferation, the members had a happy meeting and were undiscovered.

The following Lord's-day, they met at Mr. Terrill's, at the upper end of Redcross-lane, as early as six in the morning. At ten, a gifted brother, (Mr. Prosser,) belonging to Mr. Keach's church, in London, who was come to the fair, was preaching. Helliar, Sheriff Knight, the bishop's register, and others, to the number of twenty, came upon them. The sheriff and Helliar knock at the door. No answer. They send for an iron crow. Still unable to force an entrance, at either the front or the back, they break a window, and fling in a crow bar among the people. Mr. Terrill offers to let them in, if they will stay till he has tied up his mastiff dog. No. Well then stay out. No, they try again; and after much fruitless labour, accept the offer. Mr. Terrill opens the back door. Some rush in, and let in the others at the front-door. They threaten to shoot the dog, which is by no means so quiescent or so polite as his master. Helliar arrests Mr. Terrill. Would have hauled him off at once, but the sheriff said, wait. They take the names of the females, and let all go but three; then the men's names, and let all go but eight; and Mr. Terrill and the eleven are sent to Newgate. In the afternoon, they were taken, not before the mayor, but before Alderman Olive, at the Three Tuns Tavern, their attorneys not being allowed to speak for them. Mr. Terrill was committed to Newgate, the three females were that night discharged, and the men, being bound one for another to appear at the Tolzey the next morning, were sent home. Helliar and Knight hurried over

these proceedings with unusual rapidity, that they might visit another private meeting that evening in the Castle. Having satisfactorily despatched Mr. Terrill and his friends, away they post to the Castle, break open the door, endeavour to seize Mr. Young, the preacher, who, with several others, escape through a window. Then Helliar and the sheriff demolish the pulpit, and bid the rabble take care of the windows—a direction well understood, and immediately obeyed. When they were weary, they left a watch for the night, and the next day returned and completed the ruin.

In the evening the innocent offenders appeared at the Tolzey, Mr. Terrill generously providing them an attorney; and, after taking the oath of allegiance, they were discharged. But three or four days after, Helliar went into the fair, and distrained the goods of Mr. Prosser, and Mr. Crisp, (another London offender) to the amount of *fifty pounds*.

Undeterred by these vexatious and expensive proceedings, the next Lord's-day the church appointed four different places of meeting; one of which was on Durdham Down, in a cave of a rock towards Clifton. Mr. Whinnell preached, and several of Mr. Weeks's people were present. They continued two hours; and though the constables were on the alert, and carefully hunted the fields for them, they were not discovered.

On the 1st of February, Mr. Fownes was removed by *Habeas Corpus* to London. On a bond being given for £500, he was permitted to travel with a friend; but Sheriff Knight would not allow him the

privilege of even calling at his house, though he went past the door. They went on horseback—"a cold, searching, windy day, very bitter weather, and dangerous to Mr. Fownes, who had been kept close prisoner six weeks and three days."

Mr. Terrill (such is the influence of property!) was treated with more consideration. On the 4th, Sir Thomas Earle sent for him, and courteously proposed to remove him from Newgate, and make him a prisoner in his own house. It is insinuated, indeed, that he wished to exhibit a specimen of protestant gentleness, to a Mr. Young, a papist friend who was present; but he was careful to accompany the proposal with a condition with which he might be sure Mr. Terrill would not comply—that he should hold no conventicle there. To this, Mr. Terrill replied, "It is God's command that we should assemble ourselves, and therefore I cannot promise the contrary." "I thought, Mr. Terrill, you had been a more prudent man." "True wisdom is to fear God and obey him." "I will not enter into any dispute with you: but this is nothing but perverseness and rebellion against the government, and you think to make the government stoop to you; but let me tell you it is your mistake; for there are such things providing, that will make you subject. They will take a course with such obstinate persons as you are; and if you will not accept of my kindness, you may lie in gaol; and when the sessions come, in April next, the same thing, and others also, will be required of you, and a course taken with your estates: the times are not now as they were two years ago." Just as this harangue was concluded, Sir

Robert Cann came in, and endeavoured to persuade Mr. Terrill to yield, to whom Mr. Terrill replied, "In faithfulness to the Lord, I must be in my duty." On this Sir Robert was silent; but the mayor insisted on obedience, and Mr. Terrill peremptorily refused. "Then you must go again to Newgate," said the mayor, and wished him a good night. As Mr. Terrill went through the hall, he met with Mrs. Sheriff Lane and the mayor's sister, both of whom exerted their eloquence, but in vain. They offered him a refuge, as a prisoner, in Mrs. Lane's house, and the sheriff assented to the proposition; but, with many thanks for their kind intentions, Mr. Terrill declined. About ten at night, he was sent unconditionally a prisoner to his own house.

On the 16th, news arrived that Mr. Fownes was "cleared in London, because his mittimus was faulty; but he was bound, by Mr. Sayer, the attorney general, to appear the first day of next term, to answer for living in a corporation, and holding a conventicle there."

On the 19th, besides their general meetings, the aged and infirm were accommodated in small groups at the houses of different members. Mr. Terrill, being a prisoner in his own house, had three, four being permitted by law. Yet even these were not allowed to worship unmolested. Sheriff Knight, Captain Arundell, the bishop's secretary and register, several constables, and a great rabble, surrounded the house. Some scaled the wall and listened, then they broke the windows, then they demanded entrance, then they searched the house, and then—noble warriors—they

were compelled to retire without reaping the slightest advantage from their inglorious victory.

On the 3d of March, Mr. Fownes came over from Bath, to visit his destitute and desolate people, but was obliged to conceal himself from the adversary. The next Lord's-day, the two baptist churches met together, near Bussleton, in peace—Mr. Whinnell preaching in the morning, and Mr. Gifford in the evening.

On the 12th, they met in the fields near Barton Hundred, and were addressed by Mr. Buttall, of Plymouth, in the morning, and Mr. Whinnell in the evening—about a thousand present. The tything-man, to save his fine, just passed through them, and then courteously retired to a distance till they had done. In the afternoon, Mr. Weeks was captured by Helliar, "in James's-yard." They had him before the mayor, who, because he was going to "Wasborough's" church, took Mr. Weeks with him!

The next day, Monday, the church met at Park-house, over Durdham Down, and Mr. Fownes preached and administered the Lord's-supper. At first, some scrupled about receiving it on a week-day; but Mr. Fownes soon satisfied them from several considerations; particularly, that it is not in scripture limited to any day, and was, in fact, instituted and administered by our Lord on a Friday. At this meeting, one, who had been previously baptized, was received to communion. It was a rainy morning, and afterwards snow; but the greater part of the church were there, notwithstanding.

The next Lord's-day, they met in a lane near Baptist Mills. Mr. Buttall preached to near a thousand people. "Parson Pledwell" went by just before they began; and in the afternoon, a little beyond Lower Easton, they were interrupted by constables, who commanded them to disperse, which they did, and then re-assembled a little further on.

The following Lord's-day, they met near Bussleton, and were afterwards joined by Mr. Gifford's people —in all, not fewer than fifteen hundred. The enemy looked on and scowled; but the meeting being in Somersetshire, they had no authority. The next day, Sheriff Knight returned in high spirits from Newmarket, where he had been with "the merry monarch" and the duke, and got knighted.

The next two Sabbaths, the church met in peace at Stapleton; and on Friday, the 7th of April, near the "Boarden-house at Mr. Wickham's." The former part of the day they spent in prayer. Then Mr. Fownes preached and administered the Lord's-supper; and Mr Whinnell, (not a member any where, because the church to which he formerly belonged was dissolved) "declared the work of God upon his soul, and professing to believe in the principles contained in the Baptist Confession of Faith, 1677, and to be against freewill (which was held by the church to which he had belonged,) and also saying washing feet was not his judgment, he was received into fellowship"

Lord's-day, the 9th, the members met at Upper Knowl; but the informers having got notice of the meeting, they were annoyed by several constables and boys from Bedminster. After a little time, it being

very wet, the constables retired to an alehouse: meanwhile, the people went to a distance, and heard Mr. Whinnell, in the rain.

Their meetings were now, necessarily, held in the fields and the neighbouring woods, and were always well attended. Distance, weather, inconvenience, danger—all were trifles. Love constrained them, and every difficulty vanished. Conham-house was engaged for two years; and rent free they frequently assembled in the fields and woods, near Hanham, Caynsham, Bussleton, Knowl, Kingswood, Easton, Horvill, Durham Down, Westbury, and Southmead. There, on nature's carpet, and the canopy of heaven their only roof, they poured out their hearts in prayer, and sang praises to him who had redeemed them with his precious blood. At Scruze-hole, Mr. Terrill had the side of a hill cut into steps, to serve as a gallery. Nor were they unmindful of their brethren and sisters who were unable to follow them in their wanderings. Seven members were appointed to meet the aged and the sick, at their respective houses, for their comfort and edification.

Mr. Terrill was released at the quarter sessions; but was bound to appear "*de die in diem*," to traverse such indictments as might be brought against him; as also were Mr. Weeks, Mr. Harford, (one of Mr. Gifford's people) and some others.

On Lord's-day, the 21st of May, they met in the fields, probably near Kingswood—a collier's man taking special notice of Mr. Jenings the preacher. Returning home, the people were met by several informers and constables, who questioned them as to

where they had been, and because they would not tell, declared they had been at a conventicle, and should go to Bridewell. Several were ordered to appear before the mayor next morning, and five or six were sent to Newgate. These were soon released by order of "old Sir John Knight," on their promise to appear if called. Helliar shamefully abused one poor woman in the street, and meanly tore her sarsnet hood, because she would not gratify his curiosity.

The following Lord's-day, Mr. David Jones of "Swanzey," preached to them in Gassen-lanes. Some Stapleton men threatened to pull stakes out of the hedge and drive them away; but the people were so numerous they did not dare to execute their threats.

The next day, being the king's birth-day, they resolved to meet on Durdham Down; but a publican of Westbury sent the bailiff of the hundred and a dozen more to disturb them, after they had assembled three hours. When they went into court, Mrs. Alderman Yates advised them to retire into the garden and disperse; which they did, and met again in a valley, in another part of the Down, and continued until five in the evening. Mr. Jones of Swansea was with them. Mr. Weeks, also, (who was imprisoned two days afterwards) was accused of being there, but the accusation was false.

On the 11th of June, Mr. Fownes having returned from London, but not daring to enter the city, preached to the people in Kingswood, near Scruze-hole, under a tree, and endured the rain. He did the same on the 18th, but was in great danger from a company of

train bands who were sent in search of meetings. On the 25th, he preached there again, undisturbed. For several weeks following he persevered, but not without considerable danger. The informers wearied themselves out, with but little success. Several were taken on their return, on suspicion, and committed to prison and fined; but Mr. Fownes and Mr. Whinnell escaped.

In August, Mr. Fownes withdrew from public observation, because of the assizes; but in September, we find him again preaching and administering the Lord's-supper in the woods. The informers were prowling about, and met with some of Mr. Gifford's people, but Mr. Gifford himself eluded their vigilance. They were very near capturing Mr. Gardner, who preached for Mr. Weeks, but crossing the water at St. Ann's, he escaped.

Notwithstanding these field meetings, meetings in the city were kept up as regularly as they could be. One in December has a very curious circumstance connected with it—"Met for our lecture on Redcliff-hill in peace; taking a great deal of caution in coming and going—*the women wearing neither white aprons nor pattens!*"

The following year, similar meetings were held, but attended with more danger. On the 14th of January, 1683, they met at the usual place in the wood as early as nine in the morning, and separated at eleven, having had intelligence that they were to be routed at twelve. Three justices—Newton, Player, and Meredith—with about ten officers, rode along the wood by the river's side in search of the rebels—but in vain, three

meetings having been held and dispersed. In the evening, young Olive met one of the hearers, and began to question him; but two sturdy colliers threatened what they would do if he spoke another word, which so alarmed him, that he pulled off his hat to them and slunk off! "*Laus Deo!* (say the records,) and in the evening we broke bread in peace!"

The following Sabbath, seven on horseback and twenty on foot went in pursuit of the little flock, but they had dispersed earlier than before. Mr. Gifford's and Mr. Weeks's people were on the other side of the river—seen by the informers, but happily beyond their reach. But Olive and his company caught some of Mr. Fownes's people as they were returning, and several of Mr. Wey's people coming from Durdham Down, whom they put into Bridewell, and in the morning they were bound over to the quarter sessions.

On the 22d, very diligent search was made for Mr. Fownes and some others, in a great chest! Warrants were also out for Mr. Terrill, Mr. Gifford, and Mr. Weeks—the "ringleaders" being particularly in request. Consequently, Mr. Fownes was persuaded to withdraw further off, only the members knowing where, and holding communication with him. He contrived, however, frequently to meet them, and to preach and administer the Lord's-supper, notwithstanding they were literally "hunted" as so many deer.

On the 15th of March, several of Mr. Weeks's people having conformed, Mr. Fownes addressed two

questions to the church at Conham house—"First, Whether they did not stand in the same relation, and own the same principles, as at first? and, Secondly, Whether any were otherwise minded?" desiring that any who were, should speak. But, although the assizes were at hand, and many were liable to pay twenty pounds a month for their nonconformity, there was a solemn silence. "We were enabled (say they) to trust in God; not one was for conformity." They would soon have had their courage tried, and been captured by the informers, who had got information of them, had not a shrewd lad put them on a wrong course, and then run and warned the people. That week, about a hundred and fifty of the dissenters were convicted by the recorder, on the statute of the 23d of Elizabeth, and fined twenty pounds a month each, for not going to church.

On the 18th, they met in peace, and enjoyed their privileges at Conham house. Mr. Fownes preached to them in the wood. Olive had threatened to send some troopers, to convey them to Gloucester gaol; and ten of Oxford's troop, passing from Bath to Bristol, saw some, and threatened to be with the others as soon as they should learn in the city where they held forth.—"Yet we were in peace. *Laus Deo.*"

But, alas! on the 25th, Mr. Fownes was captured. He was at the time very ill; but promised his people to be with them in the wood. Accordingly he went; but about three quarters of an hour after, they were surrounded by horse and foot, the former in close ambush. Mr. Fownes mounted a horse, which one

of the informers seeing from a hill, he made a signal to the troops in ambush to pursue; but even then they would not have found him, had not a countryman innocently told them which way he was gone. By Justice Player's orders, he was detained at a collier's all night. The next day, he was taken to the Newton's Arms, on the London road, where Player, Newton, and Meredith, made his mittimus to Gloucester, for six months on the Oxford Act. Mr. Dickenson being present, was bound over to the assizes for having attended a meeting of a thousand people. Others were obliged to steal away, or they would have shared the same fate. Mr. Fownes had been preaching from 2 Tim. ii. 9. "I suffer trouble as an evil doer, but the word of God is not bound." Player also granted warrants to take twenty-eight others to Gloucester, if they could be captured. On the 15th of April, therefore, they met on the other side of the river, where the Justices were less active. But Helliar, who was made under-sheriff of Somersetshire, being on horseback, with a pair of pistols before him, came up with bailiffs and constables, while Mr. Whinnell was preaching, near Bussleton common, and they secured several, but Mr. Whinnell escaped. He manifested great anxiety to capture Mr. Terrill, but, directing his men to the wrong person—"he in the black hat,"—Mr. Terrill also escaped: but several were taken, and conveyed to an alehouse in the neighbourhood, whence some escaped: but others, including Mr. Ellis, were taken to Whitchurch, and carried the next morning to Justice Langton. Then Helliar went in search of Mr. Weeks's people, who

were near. They had just dispersed, but met again in the afternoon, when Helliar pursued them, and many fled across the water. Helliar then waved his hat for Olive and his men to pursue them on the Gloucestershire side, which they did, and compelled the officers of the hundreds, much against their inclination, to accompany them. They soon caught a view of Mr. Knight, a minister from Taunton, and Mr. Ford, a Bristol mercer. After they had pursued them a full half mile, Mr. Ford, seeing no likelihood of escape, and supposing the river not to be deep, ventured into it, in hope of reaching the opposite bank. The pursuers made a tremendous noise, as though they were hunting, vociferating as loud as they could, "Knock 'em down! knock 'em down!" The very cattle were alarmed, and scampered about in all directions, and some persons at a distance actually thought they were hunting deer! Mr. Ford and Mr. Knight both took refuge in the river; but Mr. Ford, from some cause or other, soon sinking, cried out loudly for help; but, though many witnessed the whole, not one of them would render any help; and Olive and his men made off as fast as they could. Happily, there was a Kingswood collier near—one of those "sinners above all sinners!" Having a child in his arms, he laid it down, plunged in, and with much difficulty saved Mr. Knight. He called to Watkins, the marshall, to help, but the heartless wretch refused, and in consequence Mr. Ford was drowned. Some of the kind-hearted colliers carried Mr. Knight to a house in Pilemarsh, where, by warm blankets and other suitable means, he was recovered. The per-

secutors no sooner heard that he was likely to live, than they beset the house, and demanded that he should be delivered to them, to be conveyed to prison. But Mr. Fox, their hospitable friend, barred the intruders out. Soon after, they came again, with a warrant, and searched the house; but while they were gone, Mr. Fox had conveyed Mr. Knight to another house. Then, to conceal their own wickedness, they raised a report that Mr. Knight had drowned Mr. Ford, and would send a hue and cry after him. Others insinuated that Mr. Ford had drowned himself. But the body being found that evening, the coroner was sent for, and a jury of nineteen was impannelled. Eight witnesses swore that they saw them pursued into the water, and that the pursuers repeatedly cried "Knock 'em down!" The next day, the jury brought in a verdict against three of the pursuers, as the cause of Mr. Ford's death, and the coroner issued his warrants for taking them, and desired the mayor of Bristol to do the same; but he refused—so the coroner acted alone. Hoar, an accessary, was found; but Olive let him escape.

The nine persons who had been taken before Justice Langton, were, by Helliar's instigation, sent to Ilchester. Helliar laid very grievous things to their charge—intimating that they were rebels, and dangerous to the government; that they went about the country, broke down hedges, and trampled down the corn, threw gates wide open, &c. The justice asked them whether they would traverse or submit. Ignorant of the consequence, they said they would submit. Then they were asked if they would go to church, and

receive the sacrament at Whitsuntide, and bring a certificate of their doing so: if they would, they should be cleared; if not, they should be fined twenty marks each. They desired time to consider: at length, they said they would go to church. "Oh! (says Helliar,) they call their conventicles the church!" So they were fined, in all £120, and sentenced to lie in prison till it was paid. And, not content with this, the persecutors declared they would have thirty from each side of the river, and make them go through fire as well as through water.

On Monday, the 23d, the church had a day of fasting and prayer, partly on account of Mr. Young, who had lately "turned from being parson of Bussleton, to preach among the dissenters, principally Mr. Weeks's people." A week before, he went to Gloucester, on a visit of condolence to Mr. Fownes. It being the sessions, Ralph Olive was there to prosecute Mr. Dickenson, and caught sight of Mr. Young, as he was riding into the city. He tracked him from street to street, till he saw where he put up his horse; then he procured a warrant, followed him into the prison, seized him, carried him before a justice, and swore that he had heard him preach at a conventicle in the fields, within the last two years. He was therefore committed for six months.

The hue and cry being still out against Watkins and Hoar, a constable took them both at an alehouse, where they were regaling, and kept them all night in custody, and the next day took them before Justice Newton. But before they arrived, Olive's party had been with the justice, and told him that they had

been before a magistrate in the city, who had taken bail for them. Hearing this, true or false, Justice Newton let them go. Then Watkins turned round on Smith the constable, and accused him of having had Mr. Knight in custody and allowed him to escape, which was not true. But the justice bound him to good behaviour. Mr. James Holloway, a merchant, being present as a spectator, Olive swore he had seen him at a meeting, and he was bound over to the Gloucester sessions.

The informers were now considerably elated, and boasted what they would do. On the 1st of May, they went in great confidence, and knocked loudly at Mr. Terrill's gate, who, but a quarter of an hour before, had gone a short distance. His brother-in-law, Listun, went to the door, and satisfied them that he was not there. They searched other houses, and afterwards returned, sparing no pains in their endeavours to take both Mr. Terrill and Mr. Gifford.

On the 10th, the church met at Conham-house, for fasting and prayer, taking a circuitous route, by the London road. They were followed by an informer in disguise; but one of them, who knew him, exposed the evil of his conduct so plainly and forcibly, that he left them, and they met in peace. They had, that day, letters from Mr. Fownes at Gloucester, and from their friends at Ilchester. Warrants being out against Mr. Whinnell, he was obliged to leave his school, and the church subscribed for his support. They were informed that Mr. Knight, who had never been well since he was nearly drowned, was gone to his reward.

On Lord's-day, the 13th, Mr. Gifford had a very narrow escape, while he was preaching; and the next week, Helliar went to London for five hundred writs against the dissenters. "This day (say the records) Sister Kimbar died, being taken sick on the same day on which, four months before, she had conformed, and received the sacrament at Tewin's church."

About this time they had a letter from Mr. Fownes, in answer to some queries—particularly as to whether they should meet publicly in a body, or privately in small groups. Mr. Fownes assured them that it was their duty to meet publicly, and not refrain for fear or threats, till they were compelled by force, (Ezra iv. 23,) and until they could arrange for small meetings; and that, in the mean time, it was the duty of every member regularly to attend the church-meetings.

At the Gloucester assizes, a true bill was found against Watkins and Hoar, as guilty of the murder of Mr. Ford, on the prosecution of his widow; also against Tilly and Lugg, as accessories. Consequently, they were arraigned. But, at Lord Herbert's dictation, the judge directed the petty jury to acquit them. The coroner also was intimidated, and some of the witnesses were bribed, and greatly prevaricated.

On the 19th of August, Olive and his men were very earnest in search of Mr. Gifford and Mr. Young. The latter, because he was foreman of the coroner's jury in the case of Mr. Ford, they abused as "a perjured rogue." They went to their houses, under pretence of meetings, and afterwards avowedly in search of arms, and made the family open every chest, and tumbled their linen about in sport.

A week after, there were twenty in pursuit, and Mr. Gifford and his friends had a narrow escape. They got over the water in a boat just as Watkins reached the bank: they then went up into the wood, and held a meeting. The records here state that Mr. Weeks's people, though their pastor was not in prison, had discontinued their meetings for two months—and the only public meetings were those of Broadmead and Mr. Gifford's.

On the 23d of December, several members of these two churches met on Redcliff hill. The marshall and some others went to Mr. Gifford's house, and, he being out, frightened the child, who naturally ran to the house where the meeting was held. Mr. Gifford had just ended his first prayer as they entered. Seeing the informers, he tried to escape at the back door. One of them caught him by his great coat; but on his giving a sudden spring, the coat slipped off, and he made his escape. He was pursued, but his pursuers were too late.

The following Lord's-day—a hard frost, and snow on the ground—they met in the wood; and though they stood in the snow, "the sun (they say) shone upon us, and we had peace."

On the 20th of January, 1684, Mr. Gifford and his people, on account of the extreme cold, were compelled to retire from their meeting in the fields, and went into the house of a collier near Dungen's cross. The informers had employed two boys to watch their movements, and they went and told the enemy where they were. So they beset the house, and secured them all till they had taken down their names. Then

they took Mr. Gifford, first to the Sun alehouse, then to the Newton's Arms, and the next morning they had him before Justices Newton and Meredith, who made out his mittimus to Gloucester, allowing him, however, in the custody of the constable, three days to take leave of his friends. On the evening of the the 23d, several friends went to his house to take leave of him. The informers came in, and took them and Mr. Gifford before Justice Newton, then at the Lamb, without Lawford's-gate, who made out a mittimus for them to accompany Mr. Gifford to Gloucester. After a little time he bound them over to appear at the sessions, ordering Mr. Gifford off instantly, and threatening the constable severely if he made the least delay.

Many of the members and hearers being now bound over, and others afraid to be seen transacting their usual business, it was thought expedient to hold a church-meeting on the 4th of March, to take their "sad state" into serious consideration. Mr. Terrill —their faithful pastor in reality, though not nominally —signified that their duty lay in three things: "1. To watch over one another, that none draw back to the world's worship. 2. That every one sanctify the Lord's-day. 3. That we endeavour to edify one another as members, and also do what we can for others' souls." And, considering that writs were daily expected, to levy £20 a month, £240 per annum, a man, for not going to church, or to imprison them if it were not paid, they agreed to have "circular meetings," at five different places, at which the members should attend in rotation, so as never to be at the

same place a second time until they had attended all the others. By these means, nearly a hundred might hear every Lord's-day, and alternately have the advantage of all the gifts of the church.

About this time—especially from the 17th to the 20th of March—the under-sheriff was particularly busy in appraising and distraining the goods of the dissenters. If they would pay the amount at which they were appraised, well and good—they were not removed: otherwise the goods were marked, and the owners forbidden to touch them. Those who conformed, and would furnish certificates of their doing so, had to pay the town-clerk twenty pounds for reversing the sentence against them—(Mr. Michael Pope paid a hundred pounds)—and their goods were restored. Some, to avoid going before the mayor, and to prison, liberally feed the informers. One of this honourable fraternity levied contributions on servant-maids, which being proved in one particular case, he was sent to Newgate. But he soon found a friend who swore that the witness had held a meeting in her house, when he was released, and she sent to Newgate! Lugg struck one young woman violently on the head, and then endeavoured to get her committed because she complained: and she was actually compelled to "ask Mr. Lugg's forgiveness!"

April the 7th, about eighty were bound over to the sessions; and on the 9th, Dr. Chauncy, (the first member of the Castle meeting whose admission is recorded,) indicted on the 35th Elizabeth, was sent to Newgate. On the 15th of August, a sentence of banishment was passed upon him, and on the 29th, he went privately

to London, in order to pass over to Holland. He returned in 1686, and continued until his death in 1691. He was very cheerful under his sufferings.

Towards the close of 1684, a new bishop came to Bristol, the former one, with most who were active in his service against the dissenters, being dead. The new sheriff, Twyford, entered on his office with a speech worthy of Nero—that he would find out all meetings, and, "*like, death, he would spare none!*" Sir Thomas Earle and Sir John Knight—two indefatigable persecutors—were, in December, "put out of the Council-house. Deut. xxxii. 35." The particulars of this ejectment are contained in the lost "waste book."

Mr. Fownes, whose legal term of imprisoment had long since expired, was, from time to time, compelled to appear in court at the quarter sessions, where, after much abuse, he was sure, under some pretence or other, to be remanded. He was charged with being "turbulent and seditious;" and told, that unless he found bail to the amount of £600, and gave security for good behaviour (which involved the entire renunciation of attendance at the meetings) he should lie in prison. He refused, and his inprisonment was interminable but by death.

Death, more merciful than his persecutors, released him from all his trials, on the 29th of November, 1685, he having been confined in Gloucester gaol two years and nine months. When the officers conveyed him to prison, they declared he should never come out alive; and although his mittimus was for only six months, the threat proved fatally correct.

Endeavours were made to procure witnesses to swear a riot against him; although, for a very obvious reason, no fellow-rioter was included in the indictment. On the eve of his trial, one, on whom, strange to say, considerable reliance was placed, completely disappointed the persecutors. Looking hard at the justices, he said, with evident surprise, "Lord, gentlemen! what would you have me do? I cannot swear anything against this person!" Nevertheless, they impannelled a jury, and proceeded. Mr. Fownes pleaded his own cause; and, encouraged probably by the conscientious simplicity of the witness, very pleasantly, and pertinently, reminded the jury that he and his horse could not be guilty of a riot without company! This, of necessity, made an impression on the "twelve good men and true," who, however, to preserve appearances, retired to consider their verdict. They soon returned and pronounced a verdict of "NOT GUILTY." "What! *not guilty?*" exclaimed the bishop's chancellor, who was on the bench. "No, not guilty, (replied the foreman with honest warmth)—*not guilty*, for how *can* George and his horse be guilty of a riot without company? I SAY, NOT!"

Such a verdict, in the present day, would have been a sufficient, if not a satisfactory acquittal. But Mr. Fownes was remanded to prison. When, at the end of six months, he claimed his liberty, he was told by the jailor that he had had positive orders not to let him go.

At the following assizes, Mr. Fownes made a formal appeal to the judge, who, it is supposed, would have

liberated him, had he not been influenced by his colleagues. Player and Newton alarmed his fears, telling him that if he let that man go, he would draw all the country after him. The bishop's chancellor too—minister of mercy!—and Sir Richard Hart, whispered in his ear that Fownes was a dangerous person, and that it was not *safe to the government* to let him go. In such a predicament, what could poor Judge Lewins do, but, like a pusillanimous Pilate, yield to the reiterated clamour of a faction, contrary to the deliberate conviction of his own judgment! *"If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend!"*

Sacrificed on the altar of priestly malice and judicial cowardice, the man of God was destined to die in prison. This was the more cruel, as he was labouring at the time under an affliction producing the most acute and agonizing pain. An eminent physician, who was specially consulted, did not hesitate to declare, that this imprisonment occasioned his death; and that it was no less murder, and infinitely more cruel, than if they had run him through with a sword the first day he went in!

The following, is the brief testimony of the church to his talents and his character:—

"On the 29th of November, our pastor, Brother Fownes, died in Gloucester gaol, having been kept there for two years and about nine months, a prisoner, unjustly and maliciously, for the testimony of Jesus, and preaching the gospel. He was a man of great learning, of a sound judgment, an able preacher, having great knowledge in divinity, law, physic, &c.

A bold, patient sufferer for the Lord Jesus, and the gospel he preached."

The troubled sea of dissent was now subsiding into a calm. James the Second, in prosecution of his favourite design to re-establish popery, was artfully endeavouring to propitiate the persecuted dissenters. Churchmen were disgraced, and nonconformists uniformly soothed, flattered, and caressed. Never had men a finer opportunity of revenge. Had they been so disposed, they might, in this turn of the tide, have overwhelmed their episcopal persecutors: but they were generous; and, influenced by the mild and benignant principles they professed, they availed themselves of the favourable gale, not to bear down upon the enemy, but to renew that intercourse with heaven, of the external symbols of which they had been unjustly deprived.

In the sufferings of the church in Broadmead, no one had displayed more wisdom and zeal in action, more fortitude and resignation under trials, or more christian sympathy with his persecuted associates, than Mr. Terrill. But his work was accomplished, his conflict terminated; and, after having faithfully and most efficiently served the church for thirty years, he was called to his reward. On the 25th of July, 1686, "the records" say,—"We had a church-meeting at Sister Terrill's. We were in peace. A good day for the church, after three years and five months interruption of full assemblies, partly occasioned by our violent persecutors, and partly by our own fears and backwardness. The church was desired to think of some person to be chosen as ruling elder, in the place of dear Brother Terrill, deceased."

And this is all the eulogium to be found in "the records," of a man, who, beyond all others, was the friend, the crown, and the glory of the church—a pastor in reality, and more than a pastor, though nominally only a brother, of whose gifts, *in their distress*, the church were glad to avail themselves. But his praise, and that of some other neglected worthies, is in all the churches; and the names of Dorothy Hazard, Ewins, Hardcastle, Fownes, and Edward Terrill—though no marble monument perpetuate their memory—will be had in everlasting remembrance. Mr. Terrill died in 1685, and was probably buried at Almondsbury, the place of his birth. In 1683, he bequeathed to that parish, £50 for the purchase of land, "the yearly increase to be given to successive poor, in the winter season, for ever."

In April, 1687, the church, after an absence of five years, returned to their old meeting-place. The day was especially devoted to prayer, to the choice of a new pastor, and to the investigation of the omissions of duty with which some had been chargeable during their times of trial.

Some particulars of Mr. Terrill's early life, he himself recorded. "Seeing (he says) the Lord hath at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoken unto me, I thought it meet for his glory, and the comfort of my own soul, to record so much as he shall bring to my remembrance." This account of Mr. Terrill's experience, though an abridgement from the original manuscript, formerly in the possession of Mr. Isaac James, is more minute and prolix than would be acceptable to the general reader. The introduction

will serve as a specimen of the style and spirit in which it was written, and the particulars may be easily reduced to a moderate length.

"As the apostle saith, by nature I was a child of wrath. I have strong reasons for believing it—*First*, observing the aptness of my nature to that which was contrary to the divine nature. *Secondly*, The readiness of my will to assent to the inclination to sin, and to seek opportunities to act it that visible eyes might not see it; for then I seldom thought of the invisible eye that beholds all. Calling to mind that which was done by me when I was not five years old, I had both these in me. And although, through grace, the second be subdued, yet the first is continually following me, which is a burden to me. Through mercy, I find that when evil is conceived in me, two things follow it—a loathing of it, and an indignation against myself, that ever such a wicked thought should arise in me."

When he was about six years of age, his mind was considerably impressed with various portions of scripture, to which, in his childish simplicity, he attached a literal interpretation. For example: from Jer. vii. 24. and xv. 6. he concluded that it was sinful for a man to walk backwards; and yet—such is human nature—for that very reason he indulged in the practice. On the same principle of interpretation, when sent to the door with any thing for the poor, he would place his left hand behind him, lest it should be cognisant of the act of charity performed by the right. That such interpreters should be found in the present day, among those who aspire to pre-eminence as

teachers of religion, is deeply to be deplored; but in a child, comparatively uninformed, we perceive a reverence of the word of God strikingly characteristic of the future man.

Soon after this he was sent to reside in Bristol, and describes himself as "very wicked, according to his age." At eleven years old, he was apprenticed; and a consideration of the important bearing of this step on his future life, induced at least the external exercise of prayer. The thought that he was fatherless (his father having been dead seven or eight years) led him to implore that God would be his Father. But his piety was intermittent, and his reading the scriptures altogether unproductive of comfort and satisfaction. One scripture, however, which he met with in a prayer-book, was particularly impressed upon his mind—"*What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?*" But it was far from being permanently influential; and he did not conclude that a work of grace was begun in his soul until he was nearly twenty years of age.

In September 1654, being at a neighbour's, his attention was directed to a pointed denunciation of the puritans, in connection with an assurance, that though the cavaliers ("the people of God," they were called!) were suffering for a time, God would avenge and vindicate them. This occasioned him much uneasiness, lest he should not be right in his views, as he usually heard Mr. Ewins, who he knew held with the puritans. In his distress, he prayed earnestly for divine direction, still attending Mr. Ewins's preaching. After sermon, the next day, he went, as usual,

to a meeting at Col. Scroop's, in the Castle. While he sat there, his mind was wonderfully relieved, by a powerful impression of the words, "*This is the way, walk in it.*" Unaware that they were scripture, he received them as a direct message from heaven, and his joy of heart was inexpressible.

A few weeks after, this impression was considerably deepened by a book written by Mr. Purnell, entitled "*The Way to Heaven discovered.*" There he repeatedly met with the identical passage which had afforded him such satisfaction; and finding it was scripture, he was confirmed in his belief that it was from God—the Spirit of God usually working according to the written word. This was so consolatory, that he could not forbear communicating his joy to a young man, in whose company he had been so alarmed by the predictions in favour of the cavaliers. But the young man, perfectly unconcerned about spiritual things, felt no sympathy, and reciprocated no comfort. "Yet (says Mr. Terrill) the Lord made it of use to draw me nearer unto himself; but I was *a heavy lump of sin.*"

Some time after, he heard Mr. Ewins preach from Rom. iv. 18. "*Who, against hope, believed in hope.*" He immediately resolved to imitate the father of the faithful, and to cast himself unreservedly on the sure promises of God. In the strength of this, he continued for some time, when he began to fear, that, after all, his faith was mere presumption. This fear was removed shortly after, by a remark made by an occasional supply—intimating that obedience was an evidence of genuine faith—his conscience testifying

that he was the subject of "the obedience of willingness, though not in perfectness."

About twelve months after, his mind was greatly exercised on the subject of baptism; and, that he might know the mind of the Lord, he set apart a day for fasting and prayer. He was incited to this by the recent example of Mr. Ewins and some others; and on reading the 7th verse of the 13th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews—"*Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow,*" &c. he considered that as an answer from the Lord, that he should follow their faith. Illogical as was this conclusion, it afforded him great comfort, and excited the most devout gratitude.

The day which terminated his apprenticeship, he kept as a day of fasting and prayer, praising the Lord for bringing him thus far on the journey of life, and pledging himself to be his devoted servant. From this time, his mind was happy in the divine life, and his judgment satisfied, as he then thought, that the principles of the baptists were according to the word of God.

About two months after, he was proposed to the church, and accepted, and a day for the baptizing was appointed. But a day or two previous, his mind was sadly unsettled, by a book, recommending a work said to have been written by Dionysius the Areopagite, mentioned in Acts xvii. 34, in favour of infant baptism! This naturally induced him to decline the ordinance for the present. A book, also, of Mr. Baxter's "drove me (he says) farther from the truth."

In this unhappy state he continued a year and a half. Satisfied that, "according to the scripture, a person ought to be baptized before he receives the Lord's-supper," he could not join with the church, though they would have received him without baptism. Frequently he wept bitterly, and sometimes complained that the Lord did not satisfy his mind.

Once more he resorted to fasting and prayer, fixing on Christmas day for the purpose—a day frequently devoted to superstition and sinful indulgence. Searching for a passage that had been serviceable to a friend, he found it in Isa. xlviii. 17. "*I am the Lord, that teacheth thee to profit.*" But he could not help feeling that the *next* verse was the voice of the Lord to *him*—"*Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.*" And these words, for which he had *not* sought, he could not dismiss from his mind; and he humbly received them as a deserved divine reproof for not having yielded to his previous convictions.

On the first Wednesday in the following month, he attended a monthly lecture at St. Philip's church, where he heard Mr. Stubbs. "I hearkened and hearkened (says he,) what word would be spoken concerning my condition, which was known only to God and myself. Behold the providence of God! Toward the close of the sermon, a child was brought into the meeting-place called a church, to be baptized; and Mr. Stubbs turned his discourse to the thing he was going to administer, which direct act of providence to the thing upon my heart, and in which that day I

besought the Lord to guide me, was a wonder to me."

Mr. Stubbs advanced the usual arguments, drawn from circumcision in the Old Testament, and households in the New. To the former, Mr. Terrill applied the *argumentum ad hominem*, in relation to the passover and the Lord's-supper, showing, that if the analogy be allowed in the one, it holds equally good in the other, and therefore children would be entitled to the Lord's-supper. He then adds, "As to that book which stumbled me at first, I was satisfied by providence, that brought another book to my hand, called '*The Protestant's Evidence*,' that did prove that that book which the papists call Dionysius', was written four hundred years after Christ, and therefore none of Dionysius's the Areopagite. And as to Mr. Baxter's book, the great drift of his volume is, to prove children church-members. In the time of my ups and downs, the Lord satisfied me that there was the same repeal for that as for the seventh-day Sabbath, which is, the example and practice of the Apostles, and Christians in the primitive times; and where the scripture hath not a mouth to speak, we must not to have an ear to hear. What they stretch from the word *households*, is a very uncertain consequence; for in December 1658, I reckoned above twenty households in the street where I lived, viz. Corn-street, that had not one child in them: I mean in the quality of a child, but such as were grown persons. Praised be the Lord, in not letting me any longer stand out against the simplicity of his gospel; that so, at the great day of account,

when the hearts of all men shall be revealed, my conscience may clear me that I took up that ordinance only in obedience to his holy will.—Praises to the Lord."

How well Mr. Terrill sustained his character as a member, and his office as a ruling elder, the preceding pages abundantly testify. He appears to have been a person of good property, and to have received, for the age, a liberal education. This, and the fact that many of the dissenting ministers at that time were scholars, may account for his strong attachment to a learned ministry, and for his efforts to perpetuate a succession of persons so qualified. He could not reasonably calculate on a continued supply from the Universities; and he generously made provision, by an endowment, not only for the liberal maintenance of successive pastors of Broadmead, but for the education of pious young men, recommended by the churches, for the service of the denomination at large. The particulars of this, and other dissenting benefactions, are detailed in the public accounts of the Bristol Charities, by Mr. T. J. Manchee. Another object evidently contemplated in this endowment, was the extension and support of *village preaching*.

After the decease of Mr. Terrill, the history of Broadmead assumes altogether a new aspect. The "martyr age" expired with the "Glorious Revolution;" and in vain do we look, subsequently, for stirring incident, or any illustrious displays of public spirit. It is to be deeply regretted, too, that the records, if regularly continued, have not been carefully preserved. Frequent references are made to a Waste

Book, and occasional allusions to a manuscript belonging to Dr. Evans, both which have disappeared. Mr. Foskett laments, that though the records were continued to 1687, (scantily, indeed, after the industrious pen of Mr. Terrill had rested from its labours,) he could not find any of a later date until 1720, when he himself resumed them, after a lapse of more than thirty years. The rejoicings of 1688, must have been particularly exhilarating; and next in interest to a participation in the shouts and acclamations of grateful praise, would have been the perusal of the delightful details.

In April 1687, Mr. Thomas Vauxe was chosen pastor. No particulars of his ministry appear to have been recorded. He died in 1693, and is said to have "served the church with much weakness."

Mr. George Fownes, jun. son of Mr. Fownes who died in Gloucester gaol, was chosen pastor the year Mr. Vauxe died. He continued with the church ten or twelve years, and then changed his views on the subject of baptism. In consequence, he removed to the church, meeting in the Castle, in whose records is the following entry:—" 1708. June 8. Mr. George Fownes, being free from his pastoral relation to another church, and having accepted the call of this church, to become joint pastor thereof, was publicly received into that office at a day of prayer: all his children were baptized some months before, by I. N."—Isaac Noble, who had then succeeded Mr. Way about nine years. Mr. Fownes removed from Bristol to Andover, and afterwards to Nailsworth in Gloucestershire, where he died.

The assistant-minister during Mr. Fownes's pastorship at Broadmead, was Mr. Ebenezer Wilson. He entered on his labours on the 14th of February, 1698, and continued six or seven years, when he removed to London. He was a man of considerable literary attainments, and while at Bristol kept a respectable boarding-school. Crosby describes him as "a worthy man, but not a popular preacher."

In 1707, Mr. Peter Kitterell, from Exeter, was chosen pastor. He was originally from Ireland, whence he was driven by persecution, in 1689. It is a singular circumstance, that while he was at Exeter, as a member, he was employed by that church to write a letter of invitation to his predecessor at Broadmead—Mr. Fownes. He was "an inoffensive good old-man, but of mean abilities." The church, it is said "sunk under his ministry."

As Mr. Kitterell was not competent to teach Hebrew and Greek, that Mr. Terrill's intentions might be fulfilled, and his endowment secured to the church, they were anxious to obtain a suitable assistant; and their attention was directed to Mr. Caleb Jope, a young man of highly promising abilities, then a student at a respectable seminary at Trowbridge. Inquiries having been instituted, not as to his eligibility, so much as to his attainableness, it was found that he had already received an invitation from Plymouth, and it became a question which invitation he should accept—that, or the one from Broadmead. This difficult point was submitted to the ministers and messengers of the Western Association; who, after mature deliberation, decided in favour of Plymouth—

a letter expressive of their judgment, being, by their direction, "delivered to Brother Bodenham, by the hands of Brother Gifford."

In consequence of this decision, Mr. Jope sent the church at Plymouth, the following letter :—

Honoured and beloved,

Understanding that the Association has determined, by your representation, this comes as my last resolution—(being willing to give you the preference)—that if you be willing to give me the offers as Bristol does, I will oblige myself to you; viz. to be at the charges of my education in London (for with Taunton Academy I shall not comply.) Pray leave me no longer in an uncertainty, but send me your resolution as soon as possible, or I shall not think myself obliged to wait for the answer; for it grieves me to the very heart (however insensible you may be,) thus to waste away the best of my precious time in doing little or nothing, when I might have been settled before now in a place where I might have improved in those things that might make me very serviceable for my God and his people in my day and generation. I am much in haste. Pardon shortness and other failings, thereby obliging

Your brother and servant,

Caleb Jope.

Trowbridge, June 30, 1707.

P. S. As for the time of my education, I propose not less than two years. The charges, I suppose will not be less than forty or fifty pounds per annum.

To this hasty and somewhat pettish effusion, in which we can discover none of that taste for literature of which he was so vain, the church at Plymouth sent the following dignified and appropriate reply :—

Dear brother,

Your over-haste pressing lines have given us occasion for the greater consideration; and a business of so great a concern, ought to have had a greater

weight on your spirit than we think it hath, by your rash and indigested lines to this church of Christ, especially considering the many obligations you are under to us of divers kinds; our necessity, and dear affection that we have manifested to you, in general as well as particular; as well as the determination of the Association in our favour. And you know that we are not capable of making that provision for you that you require and propose, and keep our meeting. Meanwhile we think it very awkward, that you should be so very willing, as you pretend, to give us the preference, in one part of your letter, and afterwards to propose those unreasonable terms, that you must be convinced we cannot comply with: but that we shall leave to God and your own conscience. Pray, our dear brother, let not pride and ambition, and your glory, spoil your hopeful beginning. What you have is but what God gave you, and he can take it from you. Please to read Jer. xxii. 21, to the end. God spake to Coniah in prosperity; but he said, I will not hear: this was his manner from his youth. Now, though this man was a signet on God's right hand, yet would he pluck him thence, and make him a despised broken idol, or vessel wherein there was no pleasure. And when Jonah would go to Tarshish instead of Nineveh, contrary to the mind of God, it had like to have cost him his life. Pray, our dear brother, pardon our plainness, because we think it our duty; and that you may not be led away by the errors of the wicked one, and so fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, shall be the constant prayer of

Your affectionate brethren, &c.

Signed at our church-meeting,
July 13, 1707.

It does not appear that Mr. Jope returned any answer to the above: but it is plain, that neither he, nor Mr. Terrill's trustees, nor (it would seem) the church in Broadmead, were to be diverted from their

favourite purpose. The church at Plymouth were disregarded, the decision of the Association set at nought, and Mr. Jope was forthwith transferred from Trowbridge to Tewkesbury, and afterwards to London, to complete his education, with a view to his settlement at Broadmead.

In a few years, he assumed the important post for which he had been in training, and to which he so ardently aspired. But these arrangements do not appear to have been pleasing to the Great Head of the Church, and it is not surprising, therefore, that they did not prosper. Mr. Emanuel Gifford, of the Pithay, writing to his son Andrew, then at Tewkesbury, says, "Matters in Broadmead are worse and worse every day. Mr. Jope, I am afraid, will not remove if possibly he can avoid it; and I am sure their church-state is in jeopardy, which is a very mournful circumstance. It will be well if they should consider the hand of God in this melancholy providence; and I wish it may be an effectual warning to all not to think too highly of themselves. God will maintain his controversy with a people who walk contrary to him."

Notwithstanding his reluctance, however, Mr. Jope was at length compelled to descend from the proud eminence to which he had been so injudiciously elevated. His letter to the church at Plymouth should have closed the treaty on both sides: the writer of such a letter could not be worth pursuing. He afterwards went to Exeter, and eventually, for a short time to Plymouth; but he gradually sunk so low in the estimation of the churches generally, as to be

denied all intercourse as a christian minister. Dr. Evans says, "He did not adorn his character while in Bristol, and in the latter part of his life became quite infamous."

On the removal of Mr. Jope, the church invited a much better man—Mr. Bernard Foskett, then at Henley, in Staffordshire. A "solemn call" was addressed to him in April 1720, a previous invitation having been given him in 1719. After repeated visits, during one of which he established an early Lord's-day morning prayer-meeting, Mr. Foskett accepted the call, and commenced his labours on the 7th of October, 1720.

About this time, the peace of the church was somewhat disturbed by a set of men calling themselves *prophets*, who pretended to speak by direct inspiration, exhibiting considerable agitation of body before they commenced. Their addresses were denominated *warnings;* and, as is characteristic of eccentric lights in general, they liberally indulged in censures on the ministrations of other preachers. It does not appear, however, that any were induced to join them, except a few "ardent and weak-minded females."

On the 10th of May, 1721, the church sustained a serious loss in the removal, by death, of Mr. Bodenham. He was seventy-one years of age, and had been a member above fifty-two years, and for many years a deacon. The records remark, "He had a very good report of all sorts of persons, and was justly esteemed a very pious man. He left the houses on both sides the entrance of our meeting-house, as a gift to this church, for the benefit of the minister."

He was a very influential member: it was simply at his request, that the ordinance of the Lord's-supper was celebrated on the second, instead of the first Lord's-day in every month—an arrangement until very recently continued.

On the 2d of July, Mr. Owen, the assistant minister at the Pithay, commenced a Lord's-day evening lecture at Broadmead; to which the church had consented, to prevent his establishing a separate interest.

In the month of March following, 1722, two of the Pithay members were received to communion. Their dissatisfaction, they stated, arose from the denial of liberty of speech at church-meetings, and because their assistant minister published, in their opinion, erroneous sentiments—especially about the imputation of original sin, the nature of saving faith, the way of a sinner's justification before God, and general redemption.

In May 1723, Mr. Foskett was requested to draw up the letter from the church to the Association, and to recommend the addition of the following article to the preliminaries:—"That seeing many errors have been broached, and ancient heresies revived, of late, in the world, no messenger shall be received from any church whose letter don't every year express, either in the preamble or body of it, that they of the church do approve the Confession of Faith put forth by above a hundred baptist churches, (edit. 3d, A. D. 1699,) and do maintain the principles contained therein; such letter being signed at a church-meeting, in the name and by the consent of the whole church."

The following year, 1724, they sent no messenger, but repeated their recommendation that the above article be added to the preliminaries. This year, the Tuesday evening lecture was discontinued, and a lecture on Lord's-day evenings substituted. It was commenced on the 20th of December.

On the 16th of May, 1727, Mr. Kitterell died, having sustained the pastoral office nearly twenty years. He was buried by his widow, at her own request, though the church would have cheerfully defrayed the expense. A sermon was preached before the interment.

Just at this juncture, while the church were holding a solemn meeting of fasting and prayer, seeking divine direction in the choice of a minister, Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Andrew Gifford came quite unexpectedly from Nottingham; and, after some deliberation, accepted their call to "assist statedly in the ministry of the word." During his ministry, nothing of consequence appears to have transpired; but on the 21st of December, 1729, it is recorded, "Brother Andrew Gifford, having received a letter from the church in Little Wild Street, London, the same was read to the church, and some paragraphs out of several letters from the members, and from Mr. Samuel Wilson, and Mr. David Rees, informing him of the unanimity of the church in the said call, and urging him to accept the same. After that, Brother Gifford declared he thought it his duty to accept the call; not that he was induced thereto by any unsuitable carriage of this church towards him, for he declared the contrary: and would have been willing to have continued with

us, but that he thought he might be more serviceable to the interest of Christ in London."

In his answer to that church, he assigns their *unanimity* as one powerful motive which induced him to accept their invitation. But, alas! this unanimity was of short duration. The flame of discord was soon kindled; and the result was, the removal of the pastor, with a majority of the members, and the formation of another church—the church ultimately established in Eagle-street, where the Doctor continued to labour with great success, until his decease in 1780.

"Dr. Gifford, (his biographer says,) was always humble, notwithstanding the success which attended his labours, and the respect with which he was treated. When he heard a person say that the Lord had blessed his ministry to them, he used, with great modesty, and sometimes with tears, to reply, 'Give God the praise—the man is a sinner.'

"When he found persons, especially if they were young females, much intimidated at the prospect of speaking their experience before the church, he would affectionately encourage them, by saying, 'My dear child, you will never have such another opportunity of speaking to the honour of the Lord Jesus, and to the praise of the riches of his grace, while you live.'

"In his friendly and pastoral visits, he was always cheerful and serious. When he entered a house, he would begin the conversation by familiarly asking, 'What do you think of Jesus Christ? Do you, my dear child, love the Lord Jesus Christ?' When he prayed in the families which he visited, he was

remarkably affectionate, and so very particular in suiting his petitions and thanksgivings to the cases of the individuals who composed them, that many had reason to bless God for his prayers, as well as his sermons.

"In the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's-supper, he was uncommonly lively and spiritual. While he was of a very catholic spirit, and heartily loved good men of every denomination, he was a zealous baptist, and particularly happy when attending to that divine rite. He used to say, when he was unwell, and in prospect of administering that ordinance, 'I shall get well, I hope, if I can but go and baptize.' He frequently said, when some have spoken to him of the danger attending such a service to his health, 'I never took cold by baptizing, that I can recollect, in my life.'"

The removal of such a man as Dr. Gifford must have been a serious loss to Broadmead. But he did not cease to feel an interest in their welfare. And he manifested his attachment to the Bristol Education Society, which, at the time of his death, had been formed about ten years, by bequeathing to that institution his books, pictures, and manuscripts, estimated at the value of a thousand pounds. He wished, also, to have procured a charter and endowment for that seminary as a college; but in this he was disappointed —the modesty of the tutors, Messrs. Evans and Newton, preventing the accomplishment of that object.

On the removal of Dr. Gifford, the church invited the Rev. Benjamin Boyce, of Foxton, to succeed him.

He visited them twice, remaining five weeks each time, and would have received what is termed "a regular call" to continue, but it was understood that he could not honourably leave the church at Foxton.

In 1730, application was made to the Rev. George Braithwaite, then of Bridlington in Yorkshire, and afterwards of Devonshire-square, London. But, at the time of this invitation, he returned for answer that he dare not leave his own people.

The following year, the church applied to Mr. Edward Harrison, of Newbury. He came; but, in 1733, he returned to Newbury, after having occasioned some uneasiness on account of the Arminian tendency of his preaching, He appears to have acted honourably, and the separation was a friendly one. On his removal, (for what reason we are not told,) all the pedobaptist members left, and the church adopted the practice of *strict communion.*

In 1732, it was agreed to invite the neighbouring baptist churches to an Association, to meet at Broadmead, in Whitsun-week, on the foundation of the Baptist Confession of Faith, the 3d edition, 1699, agreeably to a proposition made to the Association in 1723. The reason of this renewed invitation was, that, in consequence of a fire at Tiverton, the meetings of the old Association had been suspended, and a new one was about to be formed by some who were verging towards Arminianism.

In 1734, Mr. Hugh Evans, already a member of the church, having been baptized at Bedminster, was invited as an assistant minister to Mr. Foskett. He

accepted the invitation; and within a month he was invited to become pastor of a church in London. Some time after, he had other invitations, from London and Exeter; but he refused them all; and on the 7th of February, 1740, was solemnly set apart at Broadmead. Mr. Beddome, of the Pithay, preached from Eph. iv. 11—13.

In 1746, preaching was, with the sanction of the church, renewed at Tovey's-corner, (a license having been originally granted by Charles II. in September, 1672;) where several members of the church, who afterwards filled important stations, first exercised their gifts.

In December, 1757, the church agreed that certain pedobaptists, "who usually hear with us, desirous to form themselves into a little independent church, should have the liberty to meet in our vestry-room, at proper times, for all church affairs, and administration of the Lord's-supper. Our Brother Hugh Evans (then assistant minister) said, if they could not get one of their own judgment to administer it, he was free in himself to do it; and desired that if it would be any offence to the members of the church, they would then speak, or he should take their silence for consent—and no one spoke."*

* But though this novel reduplication passed *sub silentio* in the Broadmead church, as far as their records inform us, it attracted the attention and animadversions of others. The following is extracted from a scarce manuscript referring to the old Pithay church, in relation to what might be considered a kind of *preparation sermon*.—"Nov. 26. At Broadmead lecture, Mr. Hugh Evans preached from 1 Cor. ix. 22, 23. *To the weak, became I as weak*, &c. In this sermon, which was entirely

The following year, Mr. Foskett had a paralytic seizure at the meeting. He was present contrary to the advice of his friends, and Mr. Hugh Evans was obliged to officiate at the celebration of the Lord's-supper. This was the last time of his attendance. On the 17th of September, (eight days after the first seizure,) he exchanged the house of God for the gate of heaven, or rather for heaven itself. Within a day or two of his decease, he addressed himself to his beloved colleague, Mr. Evans, with peculiar solemnity and unusual pathos, in these words:—"I have done with man, and the inhabitants of the world, and I have nothing to rely on but the merits of my dear Redeemer; who, of God, is made, I trust, unto me, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. This is all my salvation, and all my desire."

"He was thirty-eight years (say the records) minister and pastor of this church, to which he was greatly endeared, by a train of unwearied and kind services, which he performed in and for it; and being

a railing one against our pastor, (Mr. Tommas,) he made the ordinance of baptism of no use in the church—that sprinkling was valid as well as immersion—and the subjects the same—that it could not be proved that the Apostles were baptized—and a deal of inconsistency, jargon, &c." Whether or not this criticism were just, one thing is undeniable—a more appropriate *text* could not possibly have been chosen! The only difficulty must have been to apply the conduct of the Apostle to a human tradition, which made void a christian ordinance of perpetual obligation. The pastor of the church in Petticoat-lane, London, was more severe still. He actually, in print, accused the dear good man of *spiritual concubinage!* This was too gross: he might have thought of *polygamy.*

much beloved in his life, his death was greatly and universally lamented. On the 21st inst. he was (according to his own express desire) interred from the meeting-house in Broadmead. Agreeably to his own direction, the pall was supported by six baptist ministers—viz. the Rev. Benjamin Fuller, Thomas Flower, Benjamin Beddome, John Tommas, Robert Day, and Abraham Larwill. His corpse was preceded by Brother Evans and two mutes. All the ministers in black gloves and bands. He was followed by two of the senior members as mourners, the deacons of this church with satin hatbands and gloves, and those of the Pithay church with gloves; after them, Mr. Beddome's family, the men-members, and hearers. The women walked in couples, in regular order, which made a very solemn and graceful appearance, the company being very numerous, and most of them in mourning. The oration at the grave was spoken by Brother Evans, Mr. Beddome having declined it, though he was much pressed to it."

Within a month after the removal of Mr. Foskett, his colleague, Mr. Hugh Evans, was unanimously chosen to succeed him. "And his son Caleb, *if sound in the faith*," was judged to be suitable as an assistant.* Other ministers were suggested; but the majority were in favour of Mr. Caleb Evans. He was at the time preaching to a church in London, and sent an answer to the invitation in the negative; but "sig-

* Probably, this *suspected unsoundness* had relation to his views on what was called *the modern question*, on the obligation of sinners to believe the gospel—the affirmative being considered, at that time, heterodox.

nified his intention, from a sense of duty and affection to his father, and gratitude to his friends, of paying them a visit soon, and his willingness to assist them occasionally." He soon fulfilled his intention, and stayed five Lord's-days. About two months after, early in 1759, he was again invited to supply the church permanently; and, though the invitation was far from unanimous, he "declared his acceptance, esteeming it (as divisions were likely to arise if he refused) the call of God, which he thought himself obliged to obey, notwithstanding the deep sense he had of his great inequality to the service required in such a station." On the 17th of June, he entered on his labours, with the appropriate passage—"*I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*"

In 1764, the meeting-house was again enlarged, and the congregation attended, during the enlargement, at "the Tabernacle, in the old orchard," twice on the Lord's-day. "The lecture" was preached at the Pithay, by their minister and the Broadmaad minister alternately; and the private meetings were held at Callowhill-street.

In 1767, the call to Mr. Caleb Evans was renewed, without a dissentient voice; and on the 18th of August, he was solemnly ordained to the office of ruling elder, by prayer, fasting, and imposition of hands. Mr. Francis commenced the service by reading Eph. iv. 1—17. and the First Epistle of Timothy. Mr. Day succeeded in prayer. Then Mr. Hugh Evans, (after an exordium on the astonishing condescension of God in dwelling with man on the earth,

especially after his apostacy, and in raising up a church to himself out of the ruins of the fall, and in sending and succeeding his gospel in this land, and in this city, and in that place, and in the regard shown them in raising up successive pastors and elders, and now in raising up his young servant, and giving him such acceptance and success, and rendering him both able and willing to serve the church,) proposed that the members should recognize their call, by elevating their right hands, which they did with cheerful alacrity. Then he addressed the minister, and desired his answer, which was in the affirmative. He next proceeded to remark on the parties concerned in this transaction; viz. *God*, in qualifying—*the people*, in calling—*the minister*, in accepting. Then followed what is called the ordination prayer, and the imposition of hands. Mr. Hugh Evans prayed, and with Dr. Stennett and Messrs. B. Fuller, Tommas, Day, Ash, Francis, Clark, Watts, Kingdon, and Fereber, united in the laying on of hands. Then, after a hymn, Dr. Stennett delivered an excellent charge from Acts xx. 19. "*Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations.*" Mr. Ash prayed. Mr. Tommas addressed the people, from 1 Cor. xvi. 14. "*Let all your things be done with charity.*" And Mr. Fuller closed with prayer.

Nothing of general interest is recorded for the next twelve years, when the records were committed to the custody of Mr. Caleb Evans. This was in 1780.

In 1781, he had to record the decease of his honoured parent; who, on the 28th of March, after a

long and gradual decline, "gently fell asleep in Jesus." He had been a member of the church upwards of fifty years, and nearly fifty years its minister. He was interred from the meeting-house, on the 3d of April; on which occasion, Mr. Francis preached from Matt. xxv. 21. "*Well done, good and faithful servant,*" &c. At the grave, a funeral oration was delivered by Mr. Tommas. "It was a remarkably fine evening, and the solemnity was truly awful and affecting." The procession extended half a mile. On the following Lord's-day, a funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Caleb Evans, from 2 Kings ii. 12. "*My father! my father!*" &c. This sermon was printed, and contained a character not only of Mr. Hugh Evans, but of his predecessor Mr. Foskett. The following is from the pen of Dr. Rippon:—

"Every one who knew him must admit that his gift in prayer was uncommon: his students thought it was unequalled. In the family, at occasional meetings, in the services of the Lord's-day, and upon extraordinary occasions, with copiousness, dignity, and warmth of devotion, he poured out his soul unto God; and yet with such variety, that he was seldom, if ever, heard to pray twice alike.

"His pulpit compositions were clear, nervous, and pathetic. His language was striking, his voice clear, and his elocution manly. Nor did any preacher, perhaps, ever know better than he, especially at some happy seasons, what it was to reign over his audience, enlightening their understanding, convincing their judgment, and then kindling all their noblest passions into a blaze of devotion. He closed his public

ministry with a truly parental address, from Gal. iv. 19. '*My little children, of whom I travail in birth, until Christ be formed in you.*'

"During his declining state, it is scarcely possible to describe his placid resignation to the divine will, his meekness, and his affection to all around him. Every passion seemed to be extinguished but love: with that he overflowed, to his family, the church, and all his connections."

In about a month, his son, Mr. Caleb Evans, was formally called to the pastoral office. The invitations to Mr. Hugh Evans and Mr. Foskett, were almost fac-similes of the one addressed to Mr. Hardcastle a century earlier, to which the name of Dorothy Hazard was appended! But the invitation to Mr. Caleb Evans was evidently a new composition, and appropriate to the occasion. The answer, though long, is well worth preserving. It is as follows:—

My dear and honoured friends,

I have read and wept and prayed over your truly affectionate invitation to succeed my dear and honoured father, whose memory will ever be dear unto me, and in whose steps I wish to tread in taking the pastoral oversight of you in the Lord:—a charge so weighty, so useful, and so important, that I cannot think of it without trembling. And yet, called to it thus unanimously and affectionately, by a congregation so justly, on many accounts, dear to me, and whose welfare has a long time lain near my heart, I dare not refuse it. It is now nearly four and twenty years since I first began to open my lips in the name of the Lord, and to sound the gospel trumpet amongst you; and almost two and twenty years since I first became your stated assistant minister, in a most happy connection with my honoured parent; and after more

than eight years' service among you in that capacity, you were pleased, unanimously, to call me, about fourteen years since, to the office of an elder and assistant pastor, with an express view to succeed my honoured father in the pastoral character, should I survive him, as I have now had the affliction to do. After so long a connection together, a connection of such a nature, it is impossible for me, without evidently flying from my duty, to refuse your present invitation. Having spent so considerable a part of my life among you, it is in my heart to live and die with you, and to spend and be spent for you. Amidst many discouragements that I have met with, both from within and without, and conscious as I am of numberless infirmities and imperfections that have attended me in my ministry, ever since I first came amongst you, and dispensed the word of life unto you; yet, blessed be God, I have not been suffered to labour wholly in vain, or to spend my strength for nought; but, as God is my witness, with many prayers and tears I have travailed in birth to see Christ formed in the hearts of those that heard me; so, through rich grace, in many instances, my joy has been fulfilled, and God has granted to me seals to my ministry. This encourages me to go on in the work of the Lord. And though I am now left alone in this part of my Master's vineyard, and have no longer a wise and affectionate parent to labour with me, and to guide, animate, and assist, and comfort me in my work, and God only knows the inward distress of my heart under this, to me, most trying providence; yet, encouraging myself in the Lord my God, and firmly relying on that grace which has hitherto wonderfully supported and upheld me, wonderfully disappointed my fears, and exceeded my highest hopes, I venture, from a sense of duty, and in compliance with the apparent will of divine providence, to accept your invitation; and this day, therefore, in the presence and fear of God, I solemnly take charge of you in the Lord, determining, as the Lord may enable me, to the utmost of my ability, faithfully and affectionately to watch for your souls, as one that must give an account. And as I

now consider myself fixed for life, so permit me to say, I have, in a manner, put my life into your hands; and upon you it greatly depends, under God, whether the remainder of my days shall be comfortable and happy, or uncomfortable and miserable. I may truly say, with the apostle, "Now I live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." If you fill up the duties of your station, in your respective families and connections, and fill up your places in the church of God, by a regular and constant attendance on the means of grace, and are enabled to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things, I shall live and be truly happy amongst you; but should you be suffered to dishonour your sacred profession, prove fickle, inconstant, or contentious, which I hope and believe you never will, my comforts, my happiness will die, and I shall go sorrowing to the grave. For what is my life, my joy, my crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? Ye are my glory and joy. I depend upon your prayers for me, and that you will strive together with me for the faith and practice of the gospel; so that when the Chief Shepherd may appear, we may mutually receive a crown of righteousness, which shall never fade away, and enter into our Master's joy. I remain, my dear and honoured friends,

Your affectionate servant and pastor,
for Christ's sake,
CALEB EVANS.

Bristol, May 13th, 1781.

During this year, the daughter of one of the deacons was baptized in comparative privacy, though not without the presence of some of the members. This was in consequence of her being subject to fits. But the following year two others were baptized privately, *being nervous!*

In 1783, Mr. Robert Hall, jun. then studying at Aberdeen, was invited to become the assistant minister, with Dr. Evans—an office which he accepted, and

continued to sustain, until 1791, when he removed to Cambridge. The invitation was given in October, and in December the following reply was returned:—

Aberdeen, King's College, Dec. 4. 1783.

Dear and honoured brethren,

I duly received your affectionate letter, in which you expressed your desire of enjoying my labours as an assistant minister. Your request does me honour, and confers upon me an obligation which no efforts of mine can fully discharge. Yet, young and inexperienced as I am, I tremble to think of engaging in so arduous a work, especially in a situation where all my incapacity will be doubly felt. I cannot but think a few years would be necessary to enable me to gratify even the lowest expectations. To plunge into the midst of life at so tender an age, with so little experience, and so small a stock of knowledge, almost terrifies me. Your candid judgment of my past services, I acknowledge with a mixture of pleasure and suprise; pleased to attain the approbation of the wise and good, and surprised I in any measure have attained it, which I can attribute to nothing but that tenderness and gentle forbearance which has ever strongly marked your conduct.

A retired and private sphere would indeed be more upon a level with my abilities, and congenial to my temper; yet I would willingly sacrifice my private inclinations to more important views, and lose sight of myself if I could benefit others. My reluctance, therefore, to obey your call arises merely from the feeling of my weakness, and my secret fear lest you should hereafter have occasion to repent it. If you could have dispensed with my labours until the final close of my studies, I might then have hoped to have been more able to serve you; but, if not, I submit. Let me but crave your prayers, that, as my day is, so my strength may be. Your welfare, honoured brethren, will ever lie near my heart. Numberless reflections concur with a thousand tender recollections

of past kindness to keep it there. But these are not my only inducements to embrace your proposal. It is an additional pleasure to me when I reflect with whom I have the honour to be connected; with one whom I most sincerely reverence, and to whom I am bound by every tie of affection and gratitude. I hope I undertake this work in the fear of God, and look forward to that awful day when all these solemn transactions shall be reviewed, and every secret motive that entered into them will be brought to light. Wishing that you, dear brethren, may enjoy all prosperity, and that you may be steadfast in that day, I subscribe myself,

Yours, &c.

R. Hall, jun.

On the 11th of November, 1790, Mr. Hall addressed a letter to the church, expressing his intention to leave them: and on the 23d of the following May, Dr. Evans was seized with a paralytic stroke, which rendered him unable to fulfil the duties of his office. This was followed by another in the month of August, which rendered him speechless, in appearance totally insensible, and, excepting in one or two instances, entirely motionless; in which state he continued till about three o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, Aug. 9th, when he fell asleep in Jesus.

It is a painful fact, and cannot be concealed, that the latter days of Dr. Evans were greatly embittered, and probably his death accelerated, by a serious misunderstanding between himself and his colleague. It is to this Dr. Stennett refers in his funeral discourse:—

"One affliction he met with in the close of his pilgrimage, which rapidly expedited the moment of his receiving a bright crown at the hand of Jesus, his righteous Judge. But, deeply wounded as was his

heart, fraught with exuberant and disinterested friendship, no wound given, whether intentionally or otherwise, could reach his name, which had been rendered dear to all who knew him, by a steady course of virtuous and benevolent actions. Yes, he felt the wound—he predicted the event. The last enemy he saw making hasty strides towards him. But he was prepared to meet him. Often had he expressed his wish to be gone, to recline his weary soul on the bosom of Jesus, to join associated angels and saints, and to drink at the fountain-head of those living streams which make glad the city of God."

"About a week after his first paralytic seizure, (says Dr. Rippon,) he said to one of his students, 'I am perfectly resigned to the will of God.' Speaking of the foundation of his hope, he said, 'As for those who deny the doctrine of the atonement, I cannot tell how it may be with them in the near prospect of death: for my own part, I have nothing to rest my soul upon but Christ and him crucified; and I am now unspeakably happy to think of my feeble effort in vindicating that glorious doctrine in my four sermons on that subject.

"Those who were around his bed declare that they never saw so much of the power of the gospel, to support under the pains of dying, as they beheld in the expiring moments of dear Dr. Evans, who, with an eminently propitious gale, had an entrance administered to him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

A short time before his decease, Dr. Evans requested that his friend Mr. Joseph Hughes might be

associated with him, both in the church and the academy. Accordingly, on the first Lord's-day in July, he commenced his labours, preaching from Rom. i. 16. "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,*" &c.

During the unsettled state of the church, apparently threatening a division, since the resignation of Mr. Hall, several of the members feeling greatly aggrieved by the differences between him and the Doctor, and still retaining much esteem for him as a minister, the church were very kindly supplied, for some time, by Mr. Tommas, the pastor of the church in the Pithay, their place being rebuilding. But, under these circumstances, considerable difficulty was felt in introducing any person with a view to a permanent settlement. A Mr. Jenkins, of Wrexham, was proposed; and after him, Mr. Fawcett, of Brearly Hall, near Halifax, who, though very urgently pressed, declined, on account of his age and fancied incapacity. Thus disappointed, the church turned their attention to Mr. Ryland, jun. of Northampton. "He preached four Lord's-days with great acceptance, which, together with his amiable disposition, affability, humility, and piety, gained the affection and esteem of the church and congregation, and determined them to give him an invitation," which was signed by two hundred and fifteen members. This invitation was ultimately accepted.

Mr. Hughes, in the mean time, naturally wished to ascertain his own position with the church; and in December, 1792, he received a formal invitation to continue as assistant minister, of which, after deliberate

consideration, he signified his acceptance. But he does not appear to have entertained any very sanguine expectations of a permanent settlement. On this occasion, he writes to a friend: "I have not been without my anxieties—the sound of applause has been joined by the vociferations of censure, and coldness and cordiality live in the same street. The invitation was far from being unanimous. No one offered any specific objection: their *personal* opinion was highly respectful. I believe the objectors think me scarcely plain and evangelical enough, though they cannot pronounce me even the neighbour of Arminius. I may perhaps assign too great a proportion of a sermon to *practice*. They are not altogether wrong. To preach Christ crucified is certainly the great object of a truly christian minister."

As might be expected, the union under such circumstances was of short duration. The dissatisfaction increased, rather than diminished; and at length a remonstrance on the part of Mr. Hughes, certainly a very just one, on the question of remuneration, proved the occasion, though not the cause, of a separation. Mr. Hughes removed to Battersea; but it was some time before the wound inflicted on his sensitive mind was healed. "Bristol (he says) no longer owns me: a petty misunderstanding, such as a five minutes' interview between Mr. Ryland and myself might have cleared up, has occasioned my removal. Such revolutions usually involve a measure of inconvenience and uneasiness; and my late situation, I acknowledge, held out many advantages. Yet the future part of my life may afford equal contentment, and already

the scene begins to brighten." His future position, as Secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society, most amply compensated all his griefs.

After much persuasion, and with considerable reluctance, Mr. Ryland was induced to leave Northampton. "After so long a connection with our church, (he writes, previous to his decision,) and such friendship as most of them have all along shown me, how can I rend myself from them without their consent, unless they had a prospect of a speedy and certain supply of one who would be concerned to guard them against danger on the right hand and the left? The men who would truly make void God's law, would rejoice to ensnare some on the one hand, and perhaps some would be drawn off from the doctrines of grace, on the other; *and I, when I heard of the flock being scattered that was once committed to my care, should faint under my burden, and be unable to do you any service.*"

At length, a consideration of the academy, principally, induced the church at Northampton to yield to the reiterated solicitations from Bristol; and this sacrifice of their beloved pastor was gratefully acknowledged by the Broadmead church, as "an unprecedented concern for the interests of the churches of Christ in general." The following is the letter, announcing the final decision of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Ryland:—

North-street, Jan. 25. 1794.

Dear brethren,

It is now fifteen months since I received your very respectful and affectionate invitation to remove from the situation in which I had long been fixed, and

to take up my residence in this city, that I might settle with you as your minister and pastor.

You know that I have not treated an application so respectable with lightness; but while I felt the strong ties of affection to my old friends, and a deep sense of my insufficiency for a still more important charge, I was willing to cast my care upon the God of all grace, and to comply with your call, as far as concurring circumstances indicated the divine will.

You know the obstacles which afterwards intervened, and which delayed my compliance with your request, after I had made preparation for it about ten months ago.

At length, by the voluntary consent of the church at Northampton, my way has been made clear to the satisfaction of my own mind. I am come amongst you. My friends have not only released me from the pastoral office, but have given me and my yokefellow a letter of dismission. I give up myself to your disposal, and if you continue in the same mind as you before expressed, which I have no reason to question, I am willing to take the oversight of you in the Lord.

But indeed I feel my weakness, both for the discharge of the pastoral duty towards so large a church, and for the other important station connected with that office, in the superintendence of the academy. I request you therefore to pray for me and for my colleague, and hope you will endeavour to strengthen our hands, by your best efforts to watch over each other in love, and to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things: that thus we may be assisted to make full proof of our ministry, and may rejoice in the day of Christ Jesus, that we have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. With the warmest wishes for your spiritual and eternal welfare,

I am, dear brethren,

Your obliged and affectionate brother and servant,

JOHN RYLAND.

Dr. Ryland's preaching was characterized by holy simplicity and fervour; an intense, steady, growing

zeal for the honour of God, especially in relation to the scheme of human redemption, and the most affectionate desire for the eternal salvation of his hearers. His style, though perfectly unadorned, was uniformly chaste and vigorous; and (especially in that advanced period of life in which inferior, but more showy preachers become tame and insipid,) he occasionally surprised and delighted his hearers with sudden, unpremeditated bursts of impassioned eloquence—the eloquence of a full heart, surpassed only by that of a higher order, (of which also he was an illustrious example,) the mild, insinuating eloquence of a uniformly holy life.

A few days before his death, he said to the writer, "I am a dull, cold, formal, poor creature. I hope I have known the truth, and have endeavoured to maintain it unmixed, and in its purity, and to spread it extensively; but I have not felt its influence sufficiently on my own heart." He was reminded that he had not only *known* the truth, but *loved* it, and *gloried* in it. He replied, with great earnestness, "I hope I have;—yes, I hope I have." Frequently, he was heard to offer up such petitions as these:—"Spirit of Christ, take of the things of Christ, and show them to my soul." "Lord, direct my heart into the love of God, into the patient waiting for Christ." "Pity me, and lay me low in the dust, for Jesus' sake:"—repeating, with great emphasis, the words, "*For Jesus' sake.*" One scripture he frequently repeated in Hebrew: "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." About ten o'clock, on the morning of May

the 25th, 1825, he fell asleep, with a composure and serenity that no language can describe.

After Mr. Hughes's removal, Dr. Ryland was assisted by Mr. Henry Page; and during the latter part of his ministry, by the Rev. T. S. Crisp, both in the church and academy. Mr. Crisp still continues in the academy, as the president, and in the church, as assistant minister.

The next pastor of the church was the Rev Robert Hall, their former assistant minister. He entered on his charge in March, 1826. As a preacher, it is universally allowed, that Mr. Hall was unequalled for eloquence; but eloquence perfectly dissimilar from that of Dr. Ryland. It might, perhaps, not inaptly, be compared to the *refreshing tide*—at first indistinctly heard; but as it neared the shore, its successive undulations became more powerful, and, except by the adamant heart, irresistible. Just watch the approaching tide—and in its distant movements, falling gently on the ear—its gradual clearness and power—its gathering up its strength and majesty as its last waves beat upon the shore,—and you have *some* idea of the kind of eloquence which charmed so many hearers. The eloquence of Dr. Ryland was of a totally different order — irregular, bounding, impetuous—at first, rather dissonant to the ear, but harmonious to the soul. It resembled the cataract, rather than the tide. The eloquence of Mr. Hall was *regularly* beautiful—its successive undulations flowing in such nice proportions, that, when viewed in immediate connection, the difference was scarcely perceptible. But there were sudden *bursts* of eloquence

from Dr. Ryland, to which no contemporary could approach. The former was evidently the result of careful premeditation — the latter, the impetuous gushing of a hidden spring. The eloquence of Mr. Hall was *uniform*—that of Dr. Ryland *occasional*; but the occasional bursts of the latter, so evidently the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, exceeded in grandeur and sublimity. They were both distinguished by the eloquence of holiness.

Mr. Hall continued at Broadmead until his death, in 1828. Dr. Gregory has recorded a few of his last expressions, (chiefly from Mr. Chandler's "*Authentic Account*," now unhappily out of print,) which serve to show, that, acute as were his sufferings, God had not left him without support.

When he first announced his apprehension that he should never again minister among his people, he immediately added, "But I am in God's hands, and I rejoice that I am. I am God's creature, at his disposal, for life or death; and that is a great mercy." Again: "I have not one anxious thought, either for life or death. What I dread most, are dark days. But I have had none yet; and I hope I shall not have any."

On recovering from one of his severe paroxysms he adverted to the affectionate attentions of his beloved family, as well as his numerous mercies, and exclaimed, "What a mercy it is to have so many alleviations! I might have been deprived of all these comforts; I might have been in poverty; I might have been the most abject wretch on the face of the earth."

To a friend who visited him, he said, "Oh! my dear sir, I have suffered intense agony; but I have received unspeakable mercies—mercies unspeakable—unspeakable. I am the chief of sinners, and yet I have received the most abundant mercies."

On recovering from a seizure which threatened to be his last, "I asked him, (says Mr. Chandler,) whether he felt much pain. He replied that his sufferings were great: 'but what (he added) are my sufferings to the sufferings of Christ? his sufferings were complicated: God has been very merciful to me —very merciful: I am a poor creature—an unworthy creature; but God has been very kind—very merciful.' He then alluded to the character of the sufferings of crucifixion, remarking how intense and insufferable they must have been, and asked many minute questions on what I might suppose was the process by which crucifixion brought about death. He particularly inquired respecting the effect of pain—the nervous irritation—the thirst—the oppression of breathing—the disturbance of the circulation—and the hurried action of the heart—till the conversation gradually brought him to a consideration of his own distress; when he again reverted to the lightness of his own sufferings when contrasted with those of Christ. He spoke of our Lord's enduring the contradiction of sinners against himself—of the ingratitude and unkindness he received from those for whom he went about doing good—of the combination of the mental and corporeal agonies sustained on the cross—the length of time during which our Lord hung—the exhaustion occasioned, &c. He then remarked how

differently he had been situated; that though he had endured as much, or more, than most men, yet all had been in mercy. He observed that a contemplation of the sufferings of Christ was the best antidote against impatience under any troubles we might experience, and recommended me to reflect much on this subject when in pain or distress, or in expectation of death.

"The last struggle was violent, but short. The pains of dying were extreme, but they were borne with genuine christian magnanimity. Peacefully he closed those 'brilliant eyes which had so often beamed upon us rays of benignity and intellectual fire.' Calmly, yet firmly, he sealed those 'lips which had often charmed our ears with messages of divine mercy and grace.'

"It has been well remarked, 'His greatness was lost in his goodness, the scholar in the christian, and the philosopher in the man of God. He rose by descending, his gentleness made him great; and his unaffected simplicity gave him a moral grandeur seldom encircling the brow of a mortal.'"

On the decease of Mr. Hall, invitations were successively given to Mr. Nicholson, of Plymouth, Mr. Birt, of Portsea, and Mr. Price, of Devonshire-square, London; to all which, negatives were returned. But the last invitation was the occasion of the recommendation of Mr. Samuel Summers, who had preached occasionally in London and its vicinity with great acceptance. In 1833, he visited the church as a supply, and after two Sabbaths was unanimously invited to the pastoral office; which, by the advice of

his most intimate friends, he accepted. As a reason for so unusually short a probation, it was shrewdly observed, that *the King's business required haste.* Mr. Summers entered on his pastoral duties on the 17th of November, and on the 9th of the following January, he was ordained; his friend and pastor, Mr. Price, delivering the ordination sermon, and Mr. Nicholson addressing the church and congregation.

Alas! they were soon called to deplore his loss; and the suddenness of his death, though not altogether unexpected, rendered it peculiarly painful. "We cannot (said his friend and colleague, Mr. Crisp, at the interment,) overlook its awful and tremendous suddenness. Not an hour, not the space of a few minutes, were granted for preparation—in this case, indeed, most happily, unnecessary;—yet what Christian, even though his loins be girded about, and his light burning, and he be like unto men waiting for their Lord, would not wish for some intimation of his Master's approach? Our dear friend might have desired it, for the sake of others, if not on his own account. But, whatever might have been the final admonitions, the last words, never to be forgotten, which would have occupied a short period of parting, it was not his heavenly Father's will that it should be granted."

"His departure was so sudden, (says Mr. Steane, in the funeral sermon,) as to allow no opportunity for the exercise of those graces which are especially fitted to the circumstances of a dying believer, and which in other instances have lighted up the valley of the shadow of death with the serene irradiations of an

immortal and triumphant hope. Yet, unexpected at the moment as his dissolution was, it is known, that for many months past, he had regarded himself as in a physical condition of extreme peril, aud had spoken with that serious tenderness of feeling which became his apprehended nearness to an eternal world. It was obvious to those who enjoyed the intimacy of his friendship, that his mind had been unusually exercised with spiritual things. It had acquired a more subdued and gentle tone; and betrayed, without his intending it, more than its ordinary religious emotion. Friends with whom, after a considerable absence, he recently conversed again, were delightfully struck with the unaccustomed liberty with which he spoke on experimental topics, and have subsequently been led to regard it as an indication of the maturity which his christian character had attained. I may mention also a circumstance communicated to me this morning, on my way to the house of God. Calling, so lately as within the last three weeks, upon a friend, he adverted to what he deemed the unprofitableness of his ministry; and the tears rolled down his cheeks while he spoke of the spiritually dead state of many of his hearers. Oh, how will the tears of this faithful minister witness against you another day, who have so often listened to his warning voice, and, as to any saving purpose, listened to it in vain! Having mentioned this fact, it is only proper for me to add, that his ministry, though not effective to the extent he earnestly desired, was far from having been unattended with the happiest results.

"But the period had now arrived for its termina-

tion, and the brief but distinguished career of his ministerial labours has closed, amidst the regrets and the disappointed hopes of an admiring and bereaved church. He is gathered to the sepulchre of his fathers. He sleeps in the same tomb with venerable piety and exalted genius—with former pastors of this christian community, who were among the most illustrious ornaments of our denomination, and the brightest luminaries of the church of Christ."

"To the church, (says Mr. Crisp,) under their present affliction, it is right for me to say, '*Hear the rod and Him who appointeth it.*' Not to do so, when that rod has been lifted up so frequently, and fallen so heavily—when not once only, but again and again he thus speaks to us—not to listen devoutly and seriously, would surely betoken a state of mind little suited to the past, and little prepared for the future. In looking back on the past, is it not right that they should seriously inquire, whether there be any secret thing with them which these rebukes of providence are intended to bring into view; each saying, with sincerity, '*Show me wherefore thou contendest with me?*' Are there no sins, which are brought to their remembrance by the loss of privileges for ever at an end, of instructions to be heard no more, privileges too little improved, instructions too little valued? If it be so, then suffer, brethren, the word of exhortation; and, while you humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, let it be your concern to show that he is chastening you for your profit, that you may be partakers of his holiness."

Mr. Summers died on the 15th of December 1836; and on the 13th of August, 1837, the present pastor, the Rev. Caleb Evans Birt, A. M. commenced his stated services.

On the first Lord's-day in 1840—the second centenary of the formation of the church—the practice of *mixed communion* was introduced. A majority decided that it was not only allowable, but desirable, and some professed to consider it imperative. Many protested against the agitation of the question, but in vain; on its decision, several members, of long standing, aggrieved, withdrew to other churches; and some, from personal attachments and a love of peace, remain in a state of resignation to the infliction of an acknowledged evil. "*Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.*"

That the worthy pastor of this ancient community, and his respected colleague, may long enjoy the approbation of the Great Head of the Church, in their respective spheres of labour, and be made eminently useful in their efforts to win sinners to the Saviour, and to edify saints on the foundation of the gospel, is the cordial desire of their sincere friend,

THE WRITER.

# APPENDIX.

## *Degrees of Separation.*

Page 24.

*First of all,* The Lord opened their eyes, and made them cast off the body of false doctrine of the Church of Rome, worshipping under pretence the true God in a false manner; wresting the scriptures to their own damnation; saying, the real presence of Christ was in the Sacrament by transubstantiation; and teaching men's works merit salvation, supererogation, &c.

*Secondly,* Some in authority in this nation, cast off the body of the worship of Rome; viz. the nest of idolaters, even monks, friars, abbots, priests, masses, advocation of saints, praying for the deceased, &c. These things were done long before. For which rough work, God chose rough spirits to do it, more for their own interest than aiming at God's glory. Witness King Henry VIII.

*Thirdly,* It pleased the Lord in these latter days, to raise up a people, and make them come a step further in reformation, even to come from under the skirts of the whore, and cast off popish scraps of doctrine and worship; viz. idolatrous holy-days, primarily their three great or cardinal masses; viz. Michael's-mas, Christ or Pye-mas, Candles-mas, days of their own invention, with the multitude of their saints' days, as St. Allsouls and St. Midsommer.

*Fourthly,* The Lord by his Spirit made them disrelish and cast off carnal debauched preachers.

*Fifthly,* The Lord made them to follow and cleave to lively and powerful preachers, and not be content with the abominable broth that was not poured out by his Spirit.

*Sixthly,* They forsook profaning the Lord's-day, hearkening unto homilies of which they grew weary.

*Seventhly,* They left off superstitious bowing at the name of Jesus, and to the altar.

*Eighthly,* They cast off the cross and other ceremonies at their sprinkling of children, which was a good step (though the people could not see through) to cast off sprinkling itself, the fruits of apostacy that the church fell into, till they lost the substance of religion, and kept only a shadow thereof. From baptizing souls as they entered into the church, in a river, they made a *Vaunt,* and placed it in their public places, near some great door, signifying the entrance into the church. From dipping the children in the font they by degrees took up sprinkling them. From a font, in process of time, they used a bason in their place called a church. From a bason in their church, they brought it to a bason in the house. From men (their parsons) to sprinkle, they allowed women to do it in case of necessity, as they called it; to seal their wills, and seal that which they never read, by the party's profession, or saw by their conversation. Thus setting up their posts by the Lord's.

*Ninthly,* The Lord made them cast off the use of pictures or images, and they could not bear to hear any preach or plead for that old scrap and relic of idolatry, so much like pleading for Baal.

*Tenthly,* They would not kneel at the sacrament, because the example in scripture was sitting at the Lord's-supper.

*Eleventhly,* They cast off hearing the Common Prayer, that nurse of formality and chain of security.

*Twelfthly,* They would not hear those men that did read Common Prayer, that thereby did declare themselves to own or partake in any part consentingly to the worship of the Beast.

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### *The Conference.*

Page 29.

The church also met every fifth day of the week, sometimes at one place, sometimes at another; for a considerable time at Sister Griffin's house in Christmas-street. This meeting, on the fifth day, about four in the afternoon, was a meeting for conference,

for any of the brethren to speak to a question propounded from some place of scripture. So there was liberty for any brother, and for any sister by a brother, to propose his doubt of, or desire of understanding, any portion of scripture. And the rest, especially the officers, one by one, would speak to the question, according to 1 Cor. xiv. 30, 31, 33. By this practice these seven benefits did redound to the glory of God and the well-being of the church.

*First*, Many dark scriptures were opened.

*Secondly*, Many souls had their doubts resolved, concerning their interest in Christ, and their eternal state, when they heard the doubts and experiences of others discovered.

*Thirdly*, Many cases of conscience were answered, what to do, or not to do.

*Fourthly*, Light in the church much increased, in matters of faith and practice, doctrine, worship, and discipline.

*Fifthly*, Many souls in the church confirmed and established, that it was the true grace of God wherein they stood. 1 Peter v. 12.

*Sixthly*, Many brethren that seemed to have no gift were discovered to have a spiritual understanding, and a good utterance, to the mutual edification of the church.

*Seventhly*, Those gifts that were discovered were increased, and their knowledge much enlarged; and some enabled, in process of time, (being trained up by these meetings of conference) to hold forth the word of life publicly.

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*Baptism in the River at Baptist Mill, Mar.* 6. 1667.

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Ten men and four women were baptized at Baptist-mill, in the river, by Mr. Thomas. Most of these persons now baptized, had omitted this duty (after they were convinced of it) all the winter, for fear of the cold; and about the beginning of February, it happened to be fine warm weather; about which time

they pitched upon this day to pass under that ordinance. And by reason our pastor, by a fall after he came forth of prison, had a pain that did use to take him in the nature of a sciatica, it was doubted for him to stand so long in the water might increase his said distemper. Therefore the brethren sent for Mr. Thomas to be administrator. When he came, according to the day appointed, it was such extreme cold weather, the like had not been all that winter before, for exceeding high, sharp, and piercing wind, frost and snow. It was very violent, though the snow not very deep. But the wind and frost so much, that one of the women to be baptized, in going through the meadows, her handkerchief received some wet, being about her neck, was frozen. Also Mr. Jenings, the minister, pained with the tooth-ache, so great, that his face was very much swelled, bound up, and had not been out of his house near a week before, and that day was very ill with it. Another of the men, about a week before, sprained his leg; not able to go, was carried upon a horse to the place. Another man was very weakly, thin, and consumptive, the relations of whom were very averse to the ordinance; therefore some did fear the issue, seeing the terrible sharpness of the season. But the persons themselves acted faith in the Lord; and because the administrator came so far on purpose, would not defer it any longer. And the Lord, to declare his power, did, as it were, work a miracle, to give a precedent to others that should fear the coldness of any season to do his will. The Lord preserved them all, and not so much as one ill, but rather better by it: and all are alive to this day, (being about ten years since,) to speak of the Lord's goodness. Some would fain have been spectators, but were afraid to go, it was such extreme piercing weather, and continued so for three days together. Those adversaries that heard of it after it was done, looked upon the people as mad, that they would venture on such a work at such a season. Praise and glory be to the Lord.

# KING STREET:

FORMERLY THE PITHAY, ORIGINALLY THE FRYERS.

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Of the origin of this church, there now exists, unhappily, no authentic account. This is much to be regretted, at it was unquestionably the first *baptist* church in Bristol. The earliest *recorded* baptism, as far as can now be ascertained, was on "the 15th of the twelfth month, 1652." But that it was at that time a church of some standing, and of highly respectable character, is evident, from an exclusion having occurred three months earlier, "for envy, murmuring, and lying." Such an exclusion (so rare in the present day) indicates not only previous organization, but a high state of purity, and regard for christian morals. Collateral evidence also is deducible from an entry in the Broadmead records, the same year:—"Some of the members begun to question what rule they had for sprinkling of children; and to consider there was no ground for baptizing children, much less for sprinkling them, and therefore they had not been rightly baptized according to the scriptures: whereupon one of the members, viz. Thomas Munday, being convinced

in the year 1652, desired leave of the congregation to go and join himself to *the other church in Bristol, that were all baptized, having one Henry Hynam for their teacher:* and when, after divers reasonings with the said Brother Munday, they could not prevail with him to abide in his former understanding on that point, they gave him liberty to depart, and join the church aforesaid." It is also added, in allusion to some others, "Thus of several that were enlightened in the truth, some had strength to practise it." Accordingly, on "the 18th of the fourth month, 1653," Thomas Munday, and another member of Mr. Ewins's church, were received into the church under the care of Mr. Hynam. The expression in the above extract—"*the other* church in Bristol"—instead of *another*, may also imply that these two were, at that time, *the only* dissenting churches in Bristol.

Mr. Hynam is supposed to have been the first pastor, but when he entered on his ministerial duties, is altogether unknown. From the records, he appears to have been an active zealous man, a strict disciplinarian, and a promoter of meetings for fasting and prayer. Irrespective of exclusions for ordinary offences, common to all churches, there are two or three instances recorded, during Mr. Hynam's ministry, too singular to be omitted. One was excommunicated in 1658, "for saying that the faith of this church was the faith of devils, and that the scripture was swine's food." This, in all probability, arose from an association with Dennis Hollister, at one time a member of Mr. Ewins's church, who, in London, had imbibed the most pernicious doctrines, and "poisonous

new notions." In 1672, another member, a female, was expelled, "1. For taking upon her to preach at meetings, after often admonitions, privately and publicly, by the church, and still justifying herself therein. 2. For putting on man's apparel, and coming to Mr. Hardcastle's meeting, and there go to preaching, because she thought she should not be permitted in women's. 3. For not keeping her house, being idle and gadding abroad, not minding her husband's business," &c. These, however, were spots in the sun; notwithstanding which the church evidently walked in the light of the divine countenance. The baptisms recorded during this period, on a profession of "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," were ninety-two—two, Mr. Gifford and Mr. Harford, being afterwards called to the ministry in the same church.

Mr. Hynam was assisted, during the latter part of his ministry, by Mr. Patient and Mr. Gifford. He rested from his labours on the 19th of April, 1679, about two years after the ordination of Mr. Gifford, and was the first person interred in unconsecrated ground. Speaking of the purchase of the burying-ground in Redcross-street—"There (say the Broadmead records,) they buried that weak, but holy, lamb-like servant of God, Henry Hynam, pastor before Brother Gifford."

Of Mr. Patient, during his residence in Bristol, very little is known. From Bristol he went to London, and became co-pastor with the celebrated William Kiffin, with whom he had formerly been associated, on his return from America in 1640, where

he embraced the principles of the baptists, and had, in consequence, to endure much persecution from some, who, but a short time before, had left England avowedly for conscience' sake—so imperfect, at that time, was the recognition of the principles of religious liberty! Between that period and his ministry in Bristol, Mr. Patient had been preaching in Ireland, under the patronage of Cromwell and the Parliament; and in 1653, as the minister of a church in Dublin, he signed the letters sent from Ireland, to the churches in England and Wales. At the Restoration, he returned to England, continued for a short time at Bristol, and in 1666 was publicly set apart over the church in Devonshire-square—Mr. Harrison and Mr. Knollys assisting on the occasion. This was on the 28th of June, and on the 30th of July following, he died—"leaving (as their church-book says,) a blessed savour behind him, of his great usefulness and sober conversation."

Mr. Andrew Gifford, the third pastor, was ordained on "the 3d of the sixth month, 1677, by the laying on of the hands of Brother Daniel Dyk, and Brother Nehemiah Cox, elders in London, with fasting and prayer in the church." He had been sometime previously "*a preaching member*," having been baptized "in the fourth month, 1659." At the time of his ordination, the church were few in number; but at the period of his death, notwithstanding severe persecutions, they were between four and five hundred.

Mr. Gifford began to exercise his ministerial gifts about two years after he had devoted himself to the cause of Christ in baptism—a period of great

persecution, in which, as the preceding pages testify, he had his full share. Until he was excluded by the Act of Uniformity, he frequently preached in St. Leonard's church; and being "an intrepid man, and zealous in his Master's work," even after this, by the invitation of pious episcopalians who were attached to his ministry, he occasionally published the tidings of salvation through a crucified Redeemer in the parish churches. He was once invited to preach a funeral sermon at a market-town in Somersetshire, for the wife of one of the most wealthy inhabitants, and obtained the use of the church for the occasion. But the opponents of this arrangement kept the organ playing so long after he was in the pulpit, that, perceiving their intention, he retired into the church-yard, and on a tomb-stone, without any further disturbance, addressed a numerous audience from John xi. 25, 26. "*I am the resurrection and the life,*" &c. From that time, the widower freely offered him the use of his house for preaching; and there, for many years, Mr. Gifford and his son Emanuel occasionally preached, with tokens of the divine approbation.

Mr. Gifford, recognizing the divine declaration—"*In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*"—preached indiscriminately, in church, chapel, barn, or open air. To avoid the enemy, he frequently preached in the woods at Kingswood, in concert with Mr. Fownes, the pastor of Broadmead, and the ministers of James's-back and the Castle; and, rather than disappoint a meeting, he would swim across the Avon, regardless of weather, inconvenience, or danger. So great was

the attachment of the colliers to this noble pioneer of Whitfield and Wesley, that they would form his body-guard while preaching; and if any interruption were occasioned by spies, informers, or officers, they would disguise him with a large great coat, and placing a pitch-fork filled with hay on his shoulder, effectually secure his retreat.

Occasionally, however, he fell into the hands of the enemy, and was treated with great severity. Four times he suffered imprisonment in Charles's reign—three times in Newgate, and one in Gloucester castle. With some of the Bristol magistrates he is said to have had great favour, who could not approve of "hunting so innocent and holy a man, whose very countenance and presence struck amaze into the beholders."

Once, while preaching at the Fryers, (at that time their usual place of worship) the mayor and aldermen entered, with the sword and other city regalia, and authoritatively commanded him to be silent and come down. Mr. Gifford replied, he was about his Master's business, but if they would stay till he had done, he would go wherever they pleased. Accordingly, they did so—indeed, after such a courteous reply, how could they do otherwise?—and on his accompanying them to the council-house, they dismissed him with a gentle reproof, and a friendly caution not to offend for the future.

On another occasion, being taken before the magistrates, they would have released him on his promise to desist from preaching. This, of course, he resolutely refused, replying, with Peter and John, "*Whether it*

*be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*" On this, as might have been expected, he was committed to Newgate, though only for a month. While he was there, several of the prisoners fell victims to an infectious fever; but Mr. Gifford and his ministerial brethren were removed to a house in a more airy situation, and so escaped the malady.

On one occasion, an officer being sent to apprehend him, found him in the pulpit, and commanded him to come down and accompany him. On his refusing, the officer struck him in the face; on which, turning to him with all the dignity of a righteous cause, he said, "*God shall smite thee, thou whited wall!*" This address, or the solemnity with which it was delivered, or probably both, so awed the intruder into silence, that, though he came with the determination violently to eject the preacher from the pulpit, he remained quiet until the service was concluded.

It was not unusual for Mr. Gifford to disguise himself, by assuming different dresses, as occasion required, and opportunity served. On one occasion, having on a coat much larger than usual, on being suddenly surprised by the informers, he adroitly slipped out of it, and so escaped. The next day, they had it cried before his door; but no one appearing to own it, they were foiled in their design. Sometimes his disguises were so successful as to deceive even his personal friends. One day, meeting Mr. Lawrence Brain, he said, "Did you not meet me last night, going through Lawford's-gate? why did you not speak to me?"

"I did not see you, sir!" "Did you not meet a tinker?" "Yes, sir." "That was me, Lawrence," said Mr. Gifford.

In January, 1684, he was taken by a warrant signed by thirteen magistrates. There were many circumstances connected with this event, which rendered it remarkable. Providence seemed to intimate his danger the very night before his apprehension. Mrs. Gifford dreamed that he arose to go out to preach, according to his appointment; but that, upon his opening the door, the very first step he took he was up to his knees in snow; that, on perceiving this, she endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, but in vain; that he was seized by two persons, whose names she mentioned, and taken to the Sun tavern, without Lawford's-gate, and there confined in a dining room, being placed behind a particular table; and that the men, by main force, held him down, the one by leaning on his right shoulder, and the other on his left. This dream made such an impression on her mind, that she awoke with the fright, told him the whole, and actually, as she had dreamed, said every thing she could to dissuade him. But he told her, she talked like one of the foolish women, and that nothing should hinder him from his Master's business. Accordingly, they arose, and on opening the yard door, they found that a great snow had fallen in the night, which had been so drifted up to the house, that the very first step he took, he was indeed up to his knee. On this, Mrs. Gifford naturally renewed her importunity, which he again withstood. The result was, he was that very day apprehended, and all the

circumstances corresponded with the dream; the intention of which, however, is by no means obvious: prudential minds may consider it a warning, to which he ought to have yielded obedience; but might it not have been a trial, or test of his fidelity to the cause he had espoused?

Mr. Gifford, bent as he was on carrying out the principles he professed, and disregarding what he probably considered as a mere freak of the imagination, arising from previous fear, yet prudently adopted, as he supposed, all necessary precaution. His son, Mr. Emanuel Gifford, was stationed on the watch, to give the alarm on the approach of informers. But here, again, providence interposed. In consequence of his sitting on the ground a few minutes to rest, his frieze coat was so firmly frozen to it, that he could not rise without cutting off the skirts, and was consequently prevented from giving the alarm in time. The colliers, hearing that Mr. Gifford was taken, collected in great numbers, and coming to him with bills, and clubs, and other rural weapons, offered to rescue him. But, while he was grateful for their kind intentions, he declined their services, on the principle, that though he thought he might justly do all in his power to prevent his being seized, yet, being now actually taken, and that by legal authority, he thought it right to submit to the law of the land, and leave his cause with God, who, he doubted not, would order all for the best.

On his being brought before the justices, his mittimus was immediately made out; but, on his representing that he had some affairs of importance to

settle, and that Mrs. Gifford was near her confinement, he was allowed three days, on his parole of honour that he would then surrender himself. But, before this period had expired, the officers seized him, and hurried him off to Gloucester, late at night, regardless of the clemency of the magistrates, or the inclemency of the season. He entered the gaol just as the chimes played at midnight, and this circumstance was remarkably overruled for good.

While he was in prison, he, with Mr. Fownes and other ministers, regularly worshipped with their fellow-prisoners; and a great reformation was wrought, especially among the felons. In the mean time, to prevent his preaching any more in public, his enemies procured an order from court, by means of the Duke of York, afterwards the "sweet-natured" James the Second, to confine him there for life: but the Lord rendered all their designs abortive, and taught them, that wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them, and could take the wise in their own craftiness. When the six months mentioned in the mittimus were expired, Mr. Gifford desired the keeper to dismiss him; who answered that it was not usual to open the gates at midnight. He replied, that they were opened to let him in, and therefore why should they not be opened to let him out? Having been secretly apprised of the design of his enemies to detain him, he strengthened his demand by a well-known powerful argument, and so prevalent was its potency, that the gates were actually opened for his discharge, as the chimes were playing at twelve o'clock at night—the very hour at which he had been admitted. This was,

indeed, Providence working by human instrumentality. Within six hours, an express arrived from London, with an order to confine him for life! Thus his having been hurried to prison before the expiration of his parole, was the occasion of his timely liberation. This was his last imprisonment.

The following year, 1685, he was a party to the Monmouth rebellion, as it is called. In a copy of the *Western Martyrology*, belonging to the library in the lecture-room of the Bristol Education Society, is the following statement of this affair, in the hand-writing of his grandson, Dr. Gifford, for a short time minister at Broadmead.

"The Rev. Andrew Gifford, my grandfather, was, with several others in the City of Bristol, deeply engaged in the affair of the Duke of Monmouth. He collected a considerable sum, and provided ammunition. And when the duke came near the city, he sent his son Emanuel to Knowl Castle, a mile out of the city, to invite the duke and his friends in; assuring him that there were many friends and supplies provided, and that a part of the city walls was undermined to let them in with ease and safety. But the Duke of Beaufort, the lord lieutenant, having set fire to a ship in the harbour, and sent the Duke of Monmouth word that if he attempted the city he would burn it down, the duke, seeing the flames, called a council of war, in which it was resolved to preserve the city from being destroyed. And thus, being betrayed by those about him, especially Lord ———, [Lord Gray, a notorious coward!] he desired my father to return his thanks to his friends; but, the

council having determined otherwise, he should remove into the West, and earnestly desired my father to accompany him; which my father, perceiving that the duke was betrayed, civilly refused, telling him he must now return, as his commission was at an end. Accordingly, he rode round near Caynsham bridge; but, as he was going through Kingswood, a friend met him, and asked him what he did there, telling him that the plot was discovered, and that his errand to the Duke of Monmouth was publicly known, and a troop of horse was sent out to take him, and therefore bid him shift for his life. On hearing this, he took off the saddle and bridle, and turned his mare loose in the wood, and hid himself in a great bush, near the highway side; where he had not been more than a quarter of an hour before the troop came by, swearing if they could catch the heretical dog, they would cut him as small as herbs for the pot: but missing their prey, a little before night they returned the same way; on which my father caught his mare, and as soon as it was dark returned home safe, and kept out of the way for some time. The next day the fatal battle of Sedgmore was fought. He was a melancholy witness of the sufferings of five or six, executed without Redcliff-gate, on the account of it; but lived to share in the joy of the Prince of Orange's arrival; the first news of whose embarkation, at Helvoet-sluice, was brought to Bristol by his brother, Samuel Gifford, who sailed the very night before the Prince; who entreated him to be his pilot through the channel; which he excused himself from, lest it should ..... his cargo."

It is fashionable to designate the followers of the Duke of Monmouth rebels; but if so, what were the friends of the Prince of Orange? Had the Duke of Monmouth proved successful, the same happy results would have followed three years earlier. The intrigues of popery would have been defeated, and the inhuman barbarities of Kirke and Jefferies unknown.

For twenty-eight years Mr. Gifford endured the hardships and pains of persecution. But, after the Revolution, he would relate, with great pleasure, that though many professors forsook the cause of Christ, and, from fear of man, conformed to an ungodly world and a worldly church, he lost but two of his members, and had more than thirty added to his church. One of the two became himself a persecutor, and both made a miserable end. He also observed, with evident satisfaction, that, during the whole time, he never lost a day of prayer, a meeting of conference, or omitted the administration of the Lord's-supper, except when he was in prison. And even then, he preached and prayed with the prisoners, with considerable encouragement—the gaols being remarkably reformed while tenanted by himself and other christian ministers. Mr. Gifford was the companion of Mr. Fownes at Gloucester; but, on his remarkable deliverance at midnight, he left that eminent christian to experience alone the honour of martyrdom in the service of the Saviour.

Mr. Gifford has been justly described as the Apostle of the West, having been the founder of many of the baptist churches in Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, and Wiltshire. These churches, with a parent's

fondness, he frequently visited—so frequently, indeed, that his own church, who were strongly attached to him, could not forbear affectionately complaining. Several of these churches wrote to the church in Bristol, and, with earnest entreaties and pressing expostulations, implored that he might be permitted to visit them, at least once a month, desiring his people to take into consideration what rich means of instruction they enjoyed, while their neighbours were languishing in a state of comparative destitution.

He was an active promoter of a General Union of the Baptist Churches in England and Wales, and attended all the meetings in London. When these meetings were discontinued, he succeeded in establishing a somewhat similar union among the churches in the West. He was also a zealous patron of education of young ministers, and in 1690 carried fifty pounds from his church to London, for that purpose. When asked why he was so solicitous to procure a learned education for his grandson—Dr. Andrew Gifford—seeing that neither he nor his son had possessed any literary attainments, he smartly replied, "*For that very reason.*"

In 1676, Mr. Gifford had a controversy, in writing, with his neighbour Mr. Blinman, on that prolific source of contention—christian baptism. In the records of the church, it is stated, that "many letters passed between them, manifesting the greatest affection, good will, and brotherly love; as well became fellow-labourers, and fellow-sufferers for the same Lord and Master." Mr. Gifford's portion of this controversy was not published, but extracts are preserved.

Mr. Gifford was assisted in his ministry by Mr. William Harford, and by his son, Mr. Emanuel Gifford, both of whom had been previously baptized—the former in 1666, the latter in 1693. Mr. Harford, who was "ordained to the office and service of elder and minister, according to the glorious gospel of the ever-blessed God, the 13th of the third month, 1680," had his share of persecution, and was once conveyed with violence from the pulpit to the martyr's room in Newgate. In a list of the burials in Redcross-street, he is described as "once a worthy minister in the congregation whereof Brother Gifford is pastor;" and is said to have been "interred in the same grave where Brother Hynam was interred."

It was during Mr. Gifford's ministry, that the church removed from the Fryers to the Pithay. This place was formerly a "sope-house," and was purchased in 1699, for £168. It is described, at the time, as "near the Pithay, and opposite the Pithay pump," and as including "the outlet or pavement appertaining to the said sope-house."

Mr. Gifford died in November, 1721. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. William Bazley, from a text of his own choosing—Luke xvii. 10. In this sermon, which was not printed, Mr. Bazley speaks of his deceased friend in very high terms—"fearful he should eclipse the glory of his character while he illustrated it."

"It pleased God to call him, and bring him from a state of sin and condemnation, even in the flower of his days, being then about sixteen years old; who soon gave himself to a church of Jesus Christ; and,

as he not only had a good foundation in nature, but a hearty disposition for study, and to search after the most useful knowledge, so, in a few years, he was, by the direction of God's Spirit on the minds of his people, and some urgent providences which then occurred, forced to appear publicly in the work of the ministry, in a time when many others were willing to drop it, by reason of the trouble it was like to bring upon them. But so great was his modesty, occasioned by the sense he had of the greatness and importance of the work, and his own inability for it, that he would fain have been excused from continuing in the ministry: but he could not be heard by the church, by reason of her pressing necessities at that time, and because she thought him well qualified for it: so that he continued, though often doubting the validity of his call to the ministry by God, until it pleased God mightily to bless his labours, and give him many seals of his ministry, both in city and country; in which ministry he continued until exceeding old age came upon him, with such laboriousness as it is almost incredible, and beyond the natural capacity of the generality to perform. The ministry of the gospel was the very delight of his soul, and he could say, with the Psalmist, The zeal of God's house had eaten him up. He thought no pains too great which he took in the work of his Lord, that so he might honour him, and promote the good of souls: for those were the only things which he could have in view to encourage him in the sacred work, not only because the circumstances of the people were such, that, though he preached the gospel, he could not live of the gospel, but because of three

severe persecutions which the church felt. He expended not only what the providence of God favoured him with, but he took joyfully the spoiling of his goods; and he suffered imprisonment three several times in this city, and once in another: so he rejoiced that he was accounted worthy thus to suffer for the name sake of Christ.

"He expressed to me, a few days before he died, with tears, that he had done nothing, that he had been a poor mean instrument, and that he could not but admire the providence of God, that he, so unworthy a man, should be called to the ministry in such a city as this. A very remarkable instance indeed! that a man should, from the very heart, thus express himself, after he had been instrumental in converting more souls than perhaps any one man living.

"He could be grave, without being sullen and morose, and serious without melancholy, and pleasant without levity; which holy, heavenly, and christian life and temper was so owned by God, that he did not, to the very last, withdraw the light of his countenance from him, nor suffer, as far as could be discerned, one dark cloud to cover his soul."

Mr. Gifford was succeeded in the pastorate, by his son, Mr. Emanuel Gifford, who was baptized in 1693, and "ordained to the office and service of an elder," in June 1705. There appear to be no particulars recorded of his ministry. He had the pleasure of baptizing his son when he was only fifteen years of age; and from several letters addressed to him, in 1719, it is evident his own heart was deeply imbued with the doctrines of the gospel. He is said to have

combined the qualities of a Boanerges and a Barnabas —a son of thunder and of consolation. He died at Holt, in October 1723; but his remains were brought to Bristol for interment. The following is the inscription on his grave-stone in the baptist burying-ground, Redcross-street.

"Here lieth all that was mortal, of a faithful and wise servant of Christ, EMANUEL, son of that truly apostolic man of God, ANDREW GIFFORD; with whom in his youth he first suffered, and then laboured twenty-eight years in the vineyard; and not long after him, was, according to his wish, suddenly called to receive his hire, in the fifty-first year of his age, Oct. 4, 1723."

Mrs. Gifford, on her husband's death, removed to London, and her death is thus recorded by her son-in-law, Dr. Gifford, in the church-book belonging to Eagle-street—"Feb. 24, 1738. This day, our sister, Eleanor Gifford, exchanged this life for a better, and a place in the church militant below, for one in the church triumphant above. She was for many years an honourable member of the church in the Pithay, Bristol, and was the last survivor of that church who was honoured with imprisonment in Newgate there, for adhering to the despised and persecuted cause of Jesus, in the latter part of King Charles the Second's reign. She died in a good old age, aged above seventy-five. Her constant motto was, '*Happy is the people whose God is the Lord.*' With these words, she calmly fell asleep in Jesus."

In July, 1723, about three months prior to the decease of Mr. Emanuel Gifford, Mr. William Bazley

was regularly ordained in the church as joint-pastor; and, in the following November, was joined by Mr. John Beddome, the father of the celebrated Benjamin Beddome, of Bourton-on-the-Water. Mr. Bazley died in August, 1736.

Mr. Beddome was the intimate friend of Bernard Foskett, and their friendship is described as resembling that of David and Jonathan. He died in 1757, in the eighty-third year of his age.

The following letter of dismission is equally creditable to Mr. Beddome and to the church from which he was dismissed to the Pithay.

To the church of Christ, meeting behind the Pithay, Bristol, under the pastoral care of Mr. William Bazley, the church of Christ, meeting at Alcester, in the county of Warwick, sendeth christian salutation.

Beloved in the Lord,

It is with great sorrow of heart, that we write unto you on this occasion. The thing that we have oft feared and long deserved is now come upon us. We have found it hard to digest your desire of our minister; and could not but take it very unkindly at first, that you should seek to remove from us such an one as our worthy brother, and dearly beloved elder, Mr. John Beddome. We could not forbear remonstrating to you about it, and endeavouring to hinder the loss of so useful a minister, not only to us, but also to several other churches in these parts of the country. It is with much reluctance that we dismiss him to any other people: but seeing you, who are so considerable a people, have once and again, so unanimously chosen him to be your pastor, and he is willing to serve you in that capacity, we would hope such a spring as this bids fair for much fruit of mutual comfort, and in hopeful expectation thereof we submit. Our affection to him will not allow us to cross his inclination, and our gratitude to him for his many labours

of love amongst us, excites our desires after his own and his family's greater comfort; and since it is so, as we believe it to be our duty, we would recommend him unto you. But in this respect we do not pretend to say of him the thing that is meet, or to characterize him answerable to his desert. We shall leave you to learn the knowledge of his worth in your own experience of him. It may suffice for us to inform you, that he was many years ago baptized into a church in London, [Mr. Piggott's church, Little Wild-street,] and from thence recommended to us; that after we had sufficient trial of his gifts, and had often tasted the sweetness of them, he was, on the 21st of October, 1711, in conjunction with our beloved brother, Mr. Bernard Foskett, solemnly set apart with imposition of hands, to the office of a teaching elder; in the execution whereof, he hath ever since exhorted, comforted, and charged every one of us, as a father doth his children, and has walked in fellowship with us as became a gospel minister. He has exercised much lenity towards us, and his great aim has been to nourish our souls with the words of sound doctrine, and his manner of life hath been agreeable to it. It is with regret that we transfer our right in him to you; but yet 'tis our earnest desire that the Lord may make him a burning and shining light among you, and crown his labours with great success.

We do also dismiss and recommend unto your care, our beloved sister Rachel Beddome, his wife; who came to us from a church at Nantwich with an honourable character, and has for several years walked with us as becometh the gospel.

We desire and hope you will treat him as an ambassador of Christ, and esteem him very highly for his works' sake; that by your peace and unanimity, respect to his person, and regard to his administrations, you may make him comfortable, and be his joy and crown in the day of the Lord Jesus. We hope he will be the spiritual father of many children among you, and that you will contribute all you can to make his way smooth through this thorny wilderness.

Brethren, receive them both in the Lord; and since you bereave us of so great a blessing, we can't but most humbly, earnestly, and unanimously, intreat two things at your hands, before we close this our epistle: one is, that Mr. Beddome may give us an annual visit whilst life and strength are continued; and this we are the more encouraged to hope both you and Mr. Beddome also will readily comply with us in, because it is agreeable to the apostles' custom to visit the brethren, and see how they do. The other favour we desire is, that you would make conscience of continued and earnest prayer for us, that we may be built up notwithstanding, and blest with our remaining helps. These are the easiest requests we can make, and we trust you'll not be unwilling to grant us our desire herein, it being the least you can do for

Your afflicted brethren in Christ, &c.

After the death of Mr. Bazley, Mr. Josiah Thompson, previously of Pershore, was co-pastor with Mr. Beddome, and on his leaving, Mr. Needham was chosen to succeed him. Mr. Beddome's infirmities requiring additional assistance, Mr. Joseph Anstie, previously a member of the church at Devizes, was, for some time, assistant minister. In 1752, the church invited Mr. Tommas, of Gildersome, to be co-pastor with Mr. Needham, which, though happy in its ultimate results, led to much unpleasantness.

From time immemorial, the congregation in the Pithay were accustomed to have two pastors. This, if not commenced, was continued for many years, from necessity—there being two branches of the church at a distance, to be supplied every Lord's-day —one at Keynsham, the other at Hanham—both which are now under the pastoral care of the Rev. Thomas Ayres. Still, the inconvenience of a co-pastorship

had long been felt and complained of. Exclusive and rival attachments were formed: one was for Paul, another for Apollos; and the harmony which should subsist in christian communities was, not seldom, interrupted. The church therefore resolved, that if they could once get clear of co-pastorship, it should never, except in case of necessity, be re-admitted. Mr. Needham himself, in deference to this feeling, was not chosen to the pastoral office until Mr. Beddome was rendered in a measure incapable of service by age and infirmities. When this necessity came, Mr. Needham was ordained; but an entry was made in the church-book, and signed by Mr. Beddome, two of the deacons, and other leading men, that there should in future be no co-pastors except in a case of similar necessity; viz. that Mr. Needham might live to be unable to discharge the duties of the office by reason of age or infirmity.

But Mr. Tommas, no party, of course, to such an arrangement, declined their invitation, unless he should be chosen as pastor: and the people, rather than lose him, resolved on receiving him on his own terms. Mr. Needham, foreseeing the consequences of such a resolution, and apprehending, that, should it be accomplished, his life would be rendered uncomfortable, frankly unburdened his mind to Mr. Tommas, and remonstrated again and again with the church—resting on the resolution that had been solemnly passed. Mr. Needham, at length, reluctantly agreed that Mr. Tommas should be co-pastor; but a concession produced by threats of dismission could not be pleasant. This was in August; and in October, he was

pronounced, by a person, not a member, but deputed by the deacons, to be no longer pastor or member of the church which he had hitherto served with fidelity and reputation; and this treatment they said he deserved, because he was unwilling to resign a pastorship to which he had been unanimously called, and to forfeit which he had done nothing worthy of reprehension. This sentence being confirmed by the church, Mr. Needham removed to the church in Callowhill-street* (singularly enough) as *co-pastor* with Mr.

* The church in Callowhill-street was formed by a Mr. Walsden, in 1743, and became extinct on the decease of Mr. Foot and Mr. Needham. Most of the members were not, at the time, in communion with any other church in Bristol, though some of them had been, and had left them on account of what they considered Calvinistic errors, especially as promulgated at the Pithay. Others had never been members of any church, though in their judgment baptists. And some few, it is said, were then "in communion with one of the baptist churches, but were made very uneasy by being perpetually obliged to hear doctrines preached which they judged greatly injurious to the moral character of the Deity, and tending in their general consequences to promote licentiousness; while they were pointed at and reproached for not believing them." It might be true, certainly, that at that time the churches in general, though not Antinomian, were yet hyper-calvinistic; but whether or not this were the case, it is clear that the dissentients were Arminians—the exclusive conservators, as they imagined, of the moral character of the Deity. Since that period, it has been remarked, and with some justice, that the General, or Arminian Baptists have advanced, and the Particular, or Calvinistic Baptists have retrograded, in their exhibition of the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, as an economy, from first to last, of distinguishing and sovereign grace—a golden chain, extending from eternity to eternity, on every link of which, in some form or other, is inscribed the apostolic declaration—"*By grace are ye saved, through faith:*"—a doctrine, which, without inflicting the

Foot.* But that his objection to Mr. Tommas was not personal, is evident, from the fact that they were accustomed to visit on friendly terms.

Mr. Tommas became the pastor of the church in August, 1753, without a dissentient voice — Mr. Beddome, at the same time, affectionately resigning his office into the hands of the church. It was a solemn day, the whole transactions being closed with the celebration of the dying love of Him, who, though dead, is alive again, and liveth for evermore.

slightest injury on unbelievers, (simply leaving them to their own choice,) is eminently calculated to inspire the believer with sentiments of humility, gratitude, and holy love.

* Mr. Foot kept a grammar-school on St. Michael's-hill, in which he was very successful, and held in high reputation. His irreproachable manner and judicious conduct obtained general veneration, and his death was accounted a public loss. Of this school, Mr. Bryan Edwards writes—"I had been placed by my father at the school of a dissenting minister in Bristol, whose name was William Foot, of whom I remember enough to believe that he was both a learned and good man; but by a strange absurdity, he was forbidden to teach me Latin and Greek, and directed to confine my studies to writing, arithmetic, and the English grammar. I should therefore have had little to do, but that the schoolmaster had an excellent method of making the boys write letters to him, on various subjects; such as —The beauty and dignity of truth—The obligation of a religious life—The benefits of good education—The mischiefs of idleness, &c.—previously stating to them the chief arguments to be urged, and insisting on correctness in orthography and grammar. In this employment I had sometimes the good fortune to excel the other boys; and when this happened, my master never failed to praise me very liberally before them all, and he would frequently transmit my letters to my father and mother. This excited in my mind a spirit of emulation, and, I believe, gave me the first taste for correct and elegant composition."

About four years afterwards, Mr. Tommas had the melancholy task of consigning to the grave the earthly remains of their late pastor. "The corpse (it is recorded,) was brought to the meeting, and attended by a great number, both of men and women, to the burying-ground." Mr. Tommas preached his funeral sermon, from 2 Cor. v. 4. "*We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened.*

Emulated by his brethren in the city, who were learned men, Mr. Tommas diligently applied himself to the study of Hebrew and Greek; and though he could not have made any great proficiency, his attainments were respectable, and afforded him much facility in his studies.* In prayer he was distinguished by piety, fervour, and variety. His sermons, which were chiefly written, and latterly read, were such as proved him to be "mighty in the scriptures, a workman who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." His life was exemplary, and his labours successful. For several years he enjoyed the assistance of Mr. James Newton, to whom he bore a highly respectful testimony in an oration delivered at his funeral. Such an assistant as Mr. Tommas describes him to have been, must have proved a blessing to him.

* Mr. Tommas had been previously instructed in Hebrew by Dr. Priestley. "In the interval between my leaving the grammar school, (says the Dr.) and going to the academy, which was something more than two years, I spent the latter part of every week with Mr. Tommas, a baptist minister, now of Bristol, but then of Gildersome, a village about four miles from Leeds, who had no learned education. Him I instructed in Hebrew, and by that means made myself a considerable proficient in that language."

But the life of Mr. Tommas, notwithstanding the harmony subsisting in the church, and between himself and his colleague, was greatly embittered by providential trials. He had one child who was a source of lasting sorrow. In 1778, he broke his leg in riding to Hanham. In 1783, he had to endure the loss of two sons, two grandsons, and a beloved wife. It cannot be wondered at, then, that he should preach, in relation to his own experience, from that melancholy truth advanced by Job—"*Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.*"

In 1784, the meeting-house having undergone a thorough repair, the smell of the paint, on its being re-opened, caused him to faint in the pulpit. His son —(of his own personal name, and worthy of it,)—ran up to his assistance. Having a little recovered, he said to the congregation, "Doubtless it would have been affecting to *you* if I had died here, but it would have been joyful to *me* ; for I should have exchanged my pulpit for the throne." Then he fainted again, in the arms of his son ; and was brought down as one dead, amidst the tears and the audible grief of the whole congregation.

In May, 1791, he preached the closing sermon in the old place, from "*Pray without ceasing.*" The new one (the one now standing) was built exactly on the former site. He saw it finished, and had the satisfaction of knowing that it was paid for by the people without any foreign assistance.* On December 16,

* There is a tradition, that such was Mr. Tommas's generosity to the workmen, during the progress of the building, as to induce them, in grateful commemoration, to have embedded in the wall,

1792, he preached at the opening, from—"*This is the Lord's doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*"

In 1794, Mr. Tommas related the leading particulars of his early life to a ministerial friend, concluding the narrative by saying, in a very solemn manner—"I have had my joys, and I have had my sorrows; but *having obtained help of God I continue to this day*"—adding, in the words of Dr. Watts—

Thou givest me the lot
Of those that fear thy name:
If endless life be their reward
I shall possess the same.

On the evening of that very day, he was seized with a paralytic stroke, which he contrived to conceal from his wife until six o'clock in the morning: and then told her, with the most tranquil self-possession and tenderness, that he had lost the use of his arm and leg—adding, "*It is all well, and I am quite calm.*"

His speech was affected by this shock; but the next day, when his physician proposed his taking a glass of wine, he replied, with great sweetness in his countenance, "*Woe to him that drinketh wine in the morning!*"

On the 26th of October, he was again able to administer the Lord's-supper to his flock. Christ appeared to be very precious to him. He spoke as one on the brink of Jordan, waiting the divine command to go over into Canaan. On the following

behind the pulpit, a bottle of strong beer, that the minister might never be in want of what *they* considered so essential to the enjoyment of life!

Lord's-day, notwithstanding a supply had been provided, he went to the meeting quite unexpectedly, and preached from 1 Cor. ii. 3. "*I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.*" He thus introduced the sermon—"My appearing here at this time, I doubt not, is contrary to the expectations of many; but I am come up to attempt to speak for God this morning. The words of the Apostle are literally fulfilled in me this day. And my first entrance upon the ministry among you was under a sense of much *weakness*, and in *fear for myself*, lest I should not be found faithful, and in *fear for my hearers*; and have we no reason for *trembling*, as the time will shortly come, when the speaker and the hearer must give a strict account?"

Mr. Tommas continued to preach occasionally, till July 26, 1795, when he delivered his last sermon, on his favourite subject of *prayer*, from Luke xviii. 1. Once or twice afterwards, he administered the Lord's-supper. The 2d of August was a solemn season of this description. Dr. Rippon was present. The thoughts of the good old man chiefly centred on the difference between a minister in the spring and the autumn of life. He could not pour out the wine, but was obliged to call on the deacons to assist him. It was "a humbling and melting season."

After this he was seldom able to attend public worship; but he was present at a prayer-meeting, on Feb. 25th, 1797, when the church assembled to implore the divine direction in the choice of a pastor to succeed him; and, in a very clear and collected manner, he concluded the service. After this, his

work was done. He continued in a most desirable frame of mind, until August 27, 1800, when he fell asleep, in the 77th year of his age.

On the following Wednesday, the corpse was taken to the meeting-house, where Dr. Ryland preached the funeral discourse; after which his remains were conveyed to the baptist burying-ground by his members. Mr. Sharp, his successor in the pastoral office, delivered the oration at the grave; and, having lived with him, in the same house, nearly a year and a half, was able to state, with accuracy, the particulars of his last days.

"Since I have had the pleasure of knowing the deceased saint, (says Mr. Sharp,) he appeared at times to be lost to the things of this life, and to have forgotten every thing but religion: for that he ever discovered a taste. At intervals, he was lucid and smart. He sat very placid all day long, as a waiting servant of Jesus Christ; and his mind was in perfect harmony with his helpless condition. He was truly affectionate to all around him. He always appeared glad to see his old friends when they called upon him. If any in the family were indisposed and missing, all seemed astonished at his concern; and when he saw them again, his countenance discovered the pleasure which his faltering tongue could not express. He was spiritual; he read the word of God as long as he possibly could, with pleasure; and when he was not able to read it, he rejoiced to hear it. Prayer seemed to be his element when he was capable of engaging in it; and he enjoyed family-worship to the last. Though he had lost the power of speech, his hands and eyes

would express the devout feelings of his heart. When one of the family said to him, 'Sir, it will soon be said to you, *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*,' the effect was overwhelming, almost too great for him to bear. His delight in the humbling doctrines of divine grace was apparent to the last. Supported by their sanctifying efficacy on his heart, he lived in peace with God, through Jesus Christ, without doubting or distress; and died happy in the Lord. It was a pleasure to reside with such a saint, and an honour to attend his dying bed."

The Rev. James Newton received a liberal education under Dr. Llewellin; and at the close of his studies, in 1757, he received an invitation from this church, as a colleague in the ministry with Mr. Tommas, the duties of which office he faithfully discharged until his death. In 1770, on the formation of the Bristol Education Society, he was unanimously chosen as tutor, in connection with Mr. Hugh Evans, and his son, Dr. Caleb Evans; which office also, until his death, he filled, with the highest reputation to himself, and advantage to the students. During the whole of his connection, both with the church and the academy, the most perfect amity prevailed between him and his esteemed colleagues.

One of his pupils, afterwards a minister in London, says, in a funeral sermon, "He was a man of a sound understanding, of a tenacious memory, and of an even, kind, and pacific disposition. He was sincere, affectionate, and steady in his friendly attachments. His good natural abilities were brightened and improved by extensive literary acquirements. As a Tutor, he was

condescending, affable, patient, candid, encouraging, and laborious. He drew his pupils with the cords of a man, with bands of love. As a Christian, his piety was free from the wild reveries of the enthusiastic, the servile spirit of the superstitious, and the intemperate zeal of the persecuting bigot. His benevolence was universal; and he could say with an expanded heart, '*Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*' As a Minister, his sermons were sensible, serious, and evangelical. They were free, but studied addresses. When he first went to Bristol, his introductory sermon was from '*I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified:* and his last discourse was from '*We preach Christ crucified.*'" In his last illness, he said to Dr. Evans, with great earnestness and affection, "I have been thinking of my present situation, and I find it a comfort to me to reflect, that, according to the best of my ability, I have preached *Christ crucified;* and that, my conscience tells me, from the most disinterested motives.

Mr. Newton died, April the 8th, 1790, in the fifty-seventh year of his age. His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Evans, and his colleague, Mr. Tommas, presided at the interment.

After Mr. Newton's decease, Mr. Belcher, afterwards of Worcester, was for some years assistant minister. After him came Mr. James Barnett, previously of Lymington, and afterwards of Bradford, in Wiltshire: from Bradford he went to Eagle Street as a member, preaching only occasionally. He was succeeded in the Pithay by Mr. Sharp.

Mr. Sharp was a native of Oakham, the county town of Rutland, where in his childhood he had two remarkable preservations from drowning, of which he often spoke afterwards, with peculiar gratitude to Divine Providence.

His native town at that time was very destitute of spiritual advantages. There was no evangelical preaching in the church; and though there were two meeting-houses, there was not much appearance of scriptural religion. The presbyterians had greatly declined, both as to purity of sentiment and nonconformity to the world; and the general baptists were few, and of the lowest sort of Arminians.

Mr. Sharp's mind was early impressed by reading Baxter's Saints' Rest, and he soon united with a Mr. Smith (afterwards of Eagle Street and Derby) in establishing a new interest. On this, some of his townsmen complained of him to a nobleman, by whom he was employed in business. His lordship sent for him, and charged him with leaving the church, breaking up the choir, following preachers of no character, and reading methodist books. Mr. Sharp, pulling a small Bible out of his pocket, and putting it into the nobleman's hands, replied, "If your lordship calls this a methodist book, I acknowledge I do read it. Your lordship allows your workmen an hour at dinner, and while they sleep I read my Bible. I should be glad to serve your lordship in any thing that does not hurt my conscience, but that is sacred to me. And as to the ministers I hear, your lordship has been quite misinformed respecting their characters: they are quite the reverse, being regular dissenting

ministers, and men of reputation." His lordship answered, "Well, Sharp, if you will keep to the church and forsake those men, I will make a man of you; but if not, you will do no more work for me." He replied, "Very well, my lord," and came away. As he was returning home, he was overtaken by one of the footmen, who told him his lordship wanted him. Accordingly, he waited on his lordship a second time, who said to him, "Well, Sharp, are you of the same mind?" Mr. Sharp replied, "Yes, my lord." His lordship then used many arguments, and held out strong inducements; but finding that Mr. Sharp continued firm, and that he could not prevail, he was constrained to say, "I believe, Sharp, you are an honest man, and I do not mean to distress you." Nor did he.

After a time, the praying people desired to have a minister, but their poverty seemed to forbid. At length, Mr. Smith and Mr. Sharp invited Mr. Hall, of Arnsby, to pay them a visit, which he did on a week-day. To this there was much opposition. A violent high-church lady, who lived opposite Mr. Sharp, at whose house Mr. Hall was, took every opportunity to vent her spleen. Sometimes she would open her window and bawl at them, and then come out into the street and abuse those whom she saw going to the meeting, asking them if they were not ashamed to go after such a fellow as that! Then she so virulently attacked Mr. Hall himself, that he declared he had never met with such scurrilous treatment in his life. To Mr. Sharp she said, "Oh you rogue! it would serve you right to pull your house

down." "Madam, (he replied,) we do not put our trust in these earthly houses: we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." At this, in her ignorance, although a champion of the endowed church, she was greatly enraged, telling every one who would listen to her, "John Sharp says he has got a house in heaven! There's a rogue for you!"

In 1786, Mr. Sharp went to Manchester, where he endured many trials, from penurious and unprincipled professors; and when he left them, he remarked, that though he was not sorry he went to Manchester, neither was he sorry to leave it.

In 1796, Mr. Sharp was recommended to the church in the Pithay. Accordingly, he was immediately applied to; but, from a hope that the unpleasant circumstances at Manchester might be amicably arranged, he did not reply at once to the invitation. But, on returning from one of their wrangling meetings, he said to Mrs. Sharp, "I have now determined to leave this town, and cast myself and family on the Lord. Singularly enough, the very next morning he received a second letter from Bristol, to which he immediately replied; and, after a visit of six weeks, the church gave him a unanimous call, and he commenced his labours among them on the 21st of April, 1797.

Mr. Sharp frequently said, he never liked any place so well as Bristol, and often expressed his growing attachment to the people of his charge, and the pleasure he experienced in the cordial friendship of his brethren in the ministry, of different denominations. Yet even here he had his trials, which

increased upon him towards the close of his ministry, though his usefulness appeared to increase in at least an equal degree. His labours were remarkably successful, especially in the country, at Keynsham, Hanham, and Pill, where he frequently preached. At Hanham, the Writer has heard him spoken of in terms little short of adoration; and one of the members of his own church, then a member of Mr. Sharp's, though not at all accustomed to excess of feeling, never hears him spoken of but with emotions of affectionate delight.

A trial, however, awaited him—(alas, too common among dissenters!)—attended with many painful aggravations. The church in the Pithay had always been accustomed to two ministers, though latterly not to two pastors; and after the removal of Mr. Barnett to Bradford, different preachers were engaged as supplies, in the expectation of obtaining a permanent assistant minister. With more than one of these Mr. Sharp would have been happy to have been associated; but in no instance did he urge the introduction of any one who did not appear to be generally acceptable to the people. In fact, he had very little to do with nominating the supplies—that being left to *a committee*, composed partly of members, and partly of subscribers who were not members—a system, equally opposed to scripture, general usage, and common sense. By this unnatural executive body, in 1804, an unprincipled man was invited, on the recommendation of a friend, whose acquaintance with him was, unhappily, very recent and equally slight.

Before the arrival of this man, Mr. Sharp was accidentally present in a family where his name was casually introduced, and the allusion was such as to induce a strong apprehension that he would prove to Mr. Sharp an unpleasant associate. This apprehension was soon increased by the spontaneous warning of one of the most respectable ministers in the denomination, who knew him well. On his arrival, his own conduct, in a variety of instances, painfully confirmed these apprehensions. In consequence, Mr. Sharp frankly avowed to his friends, that he could not be happy with such a colleague, and expressed his hope that the committee would allow him quietly to withdraw at the termination of the period for which he had been invited. But Antinomians—those burs of a depraved nature—are easily attached, and with difficulty removed; and many, members and non-members, although they could not obtain the slightest testimonial as to *character*, were pertinaciously determined not to resign the sweet and savoury godling. On the introduction of the question, not to the anomalous dictatorship—the committee—but to *the church*, a large majority decided in favour of Mr. Sharp, and resolutely refused to give the luscious idol any further invitation. If, on this occasion, Mr. Sharp was highly excited, who, appreciating his character, can wonder? and who, of the real friends of a holy Saviour, can condemn? The result, as might have been expected, was a separation; and, until his character was openly developed, the unholy aspirant to spiritual honours was strenuously supported. The result was the erection of the meeting house in Counterslip—a

remarkable instance of the overruling influence of Divine Wisdom and Power, in rendering subservient to his own cause, not only the wrath of his enemies, but the infirmities of his erring friends.

One re-action, however, is remarkable. The church at Counterslip, was orginally formed by the secession of forty-eight members from the Pithay. The present church at the Pithay, was formed by the secession of about the same number of members from Counterslip. Both churches, in spite of depraved human nature, and by favour of the divine blessing, are now evidently organized and prospered by Him who ordereth all things according to the counsel of his own will. For the pastors and members of both churches the Writer entertains the most unfeigned esteem; but he cannot refrain from expressing his deliberate conviction, that *friendly separations,* as churches enlarge, would be more lovely, and more conducive to the divine glory. It was the delightful observation of his friend Mr. Knibb, on his recent visit to this city, that his church in Jamaica had "*swarmed three times,*" and that on no occasion had "the angel of of discord" been permitted to interfere.

But to return to Mr. Sharp. "Though I conceive (says Dr. Ryland, in his funeral discourse,) his late trials had a great hand in wearing down his natural spirits and bodily strength, yet did he in patience possess his soul. I believe very few men could have borne such injurious treatment as that which he sustained, with equal calmness.

"The providence of God ordered it that he should terminate his pilgrimage at Manchester, which place

he visited in the hope of tranquillizing his mind and repairing his health. But though the desired object of his journey seemed at first likely to be obtained, that expectation was soon cut off. In a fit of coughing, about a fortnight after his arrival, he burst a blood-vessel. Being almost prevented from conversation, by the nature of his affliction, he could not make any large communications respecting the exercises of his mind to those around him. But he evidently appeared to possess much inward peace, and resignation to the divine will. He said he did not wish to have any will of his own, but to say, The will of the Lord be done!" When reminded that it was better to be with Christ, he said, 'He always has been my refuge, and will be still.' The friend at whose house he was, says, 'I never knew a person who possessed a more tender conscience and more unaffected piety.'"

In 1808, the Rev. Thomas Roberts, formerly of Brixham, in Devonshire, now the senior dissenting minister in Bristol, entered on the pastoral office in connection with this church; and in 1817, the meeting-house in the Pithay being much too small for the congregation, they removed to their present commodious place in King-street. There may the Lord command the blessing, even life for evermore!

To the pastor and members of this ancient community, this portion of "*The Rise and Progress of Dissent in Bristol,*" is respectfully inscribed by their sincere friend,

THE WRITER.

# THE FRIENDS.

The Society of Friends in Bristol appears to have originated in the zealous efforts of John Camm, John Audland, Edward Burrough, and Francis Howgill, in Sept. 1653. The sentiments and conduct of this section of the church, as recorded by their own historians, were essentially different from those of other dissenters, who laboured and suffered in the same city, at the same period. They were, emphatically, "a peculiar people." Other separatists from the Establishment, would have been thankful for the liberty of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences, and of exposing and denouncing the evils of the national religion in their own assemblies. But the quakers—(the term is not now used in derision, but simply as a convenient conventional phrase,)—openly presented themselves in the churches, "so called," and deliberately published what they designated warnings from the Lord—pertinaceously pursuing, in the enemy's own camp, a war of unflinching aggression. This, with their strenuous opposition to compulsory religious payments, the adoption of a peculiar dress and manner of speech, and their uniform rejection of some of the courtesies of society, as savouring, in their estimation, if not of idolatry, yet

certainly of a homage which the most exalted ought not to require, or the most humble to yield, naturally procured for them an unenviable notoriety, and a corresponding superabundance of suffering. Not only did the body at large receive their full share of the general persecution; but individuals, who had thus rendered themselves offensively conspicuous, were visited with peculiar rancour and retaliation. In one feature of their history, with a single exception, the Friends greatly excelled their fellow-sufferers of other denominations, at least in Bristol—the minuteness and particularity with which they recorded their conversations, discussions, and public examinations. Other communities have left on record interesting particulars of their internal economy, and of their experience irrespective of persecution, with some choice specimens of spiritual instruction suited to their own members; but it is to be deeply regretted, that they were not equally careful to perpetuate the general details of their public history, and especially the interchange of sentiments which transpired between them and their persecutors. In this, the Friends have decidedly the pre-eminence.

The preaching of Camm and Audland and their associates, is described, by their adherents, as truly apostolic—as being "*in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.*" Multitudes flocked to hear them, and embraced their doctrines. The places they could obtain being too small, their public assemblies, even in the winter, were held in the fields, and consisted of two, three, and sometimes nearly four thousand hearers.

This alarmed the authorities; and on the 30th of October, Burrough and Howgill were summoned to appear at the Tolzey. They were ordered to leave the city immediately—a command to which they promptly refused obedience; alleging, that "they came not in the will of man; but that when He moved them to depart who moved them thither, they should obey." Mortifying as such an answer must necessarily have been, they were yet allowed peaceably to retire: but they continued in the city, preaching as before. The magistrates were the more annoyed at this, because, on reflection, they found they could not legally enforce the order they had made. But the demon of persecution scorns to yield to trifles; and the most violent of the citizens, enraged at such daring contumacy, charged the authorities with pusillanimity, and incited the mob to act for the "good cause," regardless of consequences.

Intimidated by the menaces of the populace, the magistrates not only committed several to prison, but exercised towards them unusual severity. Among the sufferers, were John Worring and Elizabeth Marshall. The former was accused of having called Samuel Grimes, a clergyman, *a devil*. Worring denied the charge; but offered to prove him one by his own confession. This not being satisfactory, he was imprisoned.

On the 10th of December, Elizabeth Marshall took her station in "Nicholas steeple-house," to deliver a message to "the priest, Ralph Farmer." At the conclusion of the ordinary service, and just as he was about to administer the Lord's-supper, she cried out—

"This is the word of the Lord to thee, Farmer. Wo, wo, wo, from the Lord, to them who take the word of the Lord in their mouths, and the Lord never sent them." On this, as might have been expected, she was very roughly treated. But, being resolute, and having a little recovered from the assault, she turned to the people, and said, "This is the mighty day of the Lord: the Lord is coming to pull his people out of the mouths of all dumb shepherds." She was soon silenced, hurried into the street, pelted with dirt and stones; and Farmer openly called out to the mayor, who had been present the whole of the time, to see that the usual "course might be taken with her."

On the 17th of the same month, she delivered a message to "John Knowles, priest at the steeple-house called the College;" whom she heard patiently to the conclusion of the service; when she could refrain no longer, but cried out, "This is the word of the Lord to thee, Knowles: I warn thee to repent, and to mind the light of Christ in thy conscience." This naturally produced a tumult, and she was expelled, and sent to Newgate.

Two days after, Camm and Audland, having appointed a meeting at Brislington, were passing over the bridge, on their way thither. As they studied no concealment, the mob were in possession of their movements; and several hundreds, having been previously instigated, and wrought up to a high pitch of fury, by Farmer, the "persecuting priest," violently assaulted them, and opposed their progress. "Hang them presently!" "Knock them down!" were the words of command to an infuriated mob: and the

merciful proposition was made to drag them through Wine-street, (probably to St. Michael's-hill,) to execute summary vengeance upon them. But some of the more moderate suggested that they should be taken before the mayor. Then they were dragged to the Tolzey, where the fury of the mob was again fanned to a flame, and would probably have proved fatal, had not a friend secured the unoffending strangers, and provided them a safe asylum in his own house. After a little time, the officers of the garrison, alarmed for the peace of the city, approached the scene of confusion; on which this valiant mob hastily dispersed in every direction! Three of the rioters were apprehended; but about fifteen hundred of their comrades vociferously demanded, and easily obtained their discharge. "*Away with these men, and release unto us Barabbas!*"

Towards evening, the next day, the signal was given, that "the quakers," who had been to Brislington in the morning, were returning. This was enough. The demon of malevolence was let loose. Multitudes assembled on the bridge, and on the banks of the Avon, "uttering terrible language and threats." But the magistrates, fearing bloodshed, privately sent their sword-bearer, to induce the Friends to return some other way, intimating, that, otherwise, they could not undertake for their safety. They were thus providentially preserved.

These outrages were, unquestionably, countenanced by individuals in office. Indeed, it was currently reported, that Alderman Hellier said, publicly, at the Tolzey, to some of the rioters, that he would 'spend

his blood, and lose his life, rather than any of the apprentices should be imprisoned.' Such patronage naturally flattered their vanity, and inflamed their insolence.

On the 23d of the following January, a warrant was granted for searching the house in Corn-street, where the quakers usually assembled. The master of the house (Capt. Bishop) resisted the warrant, as illegal, and a riot resulted. When the worshippers left the house, they were violently assaulted with "blows, kicks, dirt, stones, abuse, reproaches, and clamour;" the mob following them, and neither constables nor magistrates controlling their fury. True, the Council-house was in the same street, and summary justice might have been executed: but, although some of the aldermen witnessed this disgraceful outrage, yet, so far were they from exerting their authority to repress it, that the rioters were gratified with the amusing spectacle of an alderman and a priest laughing heartily at their exploits! The alderman was "Joseph Jackson,"—the priest, "John Knolles."

Two days afterwards, (the 25th,) a warrant was issued against Camm, Audland, Burrough, and Howgill; and, strange to say, George Fox and James Naylor; neither of whom had at that time made their appearance in the city! The pretence was, that certain Jesuits, of the Franciscan order, were known, on various occasions, to have assumed the garb of quakers, and in that disguise to have instilled their pernicious doctrines; and that the parties whose names are mentioned above, were strongly suspected

of coming from Rome. The *fact* of certain papists (some of whom were jesuits,) having assumed this disguise, not only in London, but at Bristol, has been clearly established. (See pp. 34, 35.) But nothing whatever can be adduced to implicate the parties against whom this warrant was issued. And yet, it must be candidly admitted, that, while charity would exonerate them from *intentional connivance*, they certainly did not exhibit their usual shrewdness and penetration, in not discovering that the man who had the arrangement of a quakers' meeting in Corn-street, was not a quaker, but an Irish papist! It may also be worthy of remark, that Besse himself, one of their principal historians, relates an instance or two calculated to strengthen the suspicions of their opponents.

One Thomas Murford was apprehended at a meeting-house in Redcliff-street, and taken before the mayor; when it was ascertained that he wore a coat of hair next the skin. When asked by the authorities why he came to the city in that habit, he replied, "I was commanded of the Lord to come, and mourn in sackcloth for you, and to warn you to let God's people alone, as you will answer it at the day of judgment, and not to persecute and imprison his saints." He was sent out of town; but returning, he was again taken before the mayor, who commanded that his hat should be removed, when the ashes on his head flew about, which he shook from him, and invoked the attention of the mayor to "the Lord of Hosts." He was then committed to Newgate; and when his wife complained of the injustice of her husband's imprisonment, she was sent to Bridewell.

Sarah Goldsmith also clothed herself in sackcloth, and scattered ashes or earth on her head, her hair hanging loosely about her. In this attire, without any other clothing than shoes, she passed through every gate of the city, with two companions, very early in the morning. Some of the people followed her, but considered her more an object of pity than of reproach. About nine, she exhibited herself in the same costume at the High Cross, in view of the town and market, "as a sign against pride." Having stood there about half an hour, she became the sport of the rude and vulgar; and would probably have been seriously injured, had not some of the people, from a feeling of compassion, forced her into a neighbouring shop. Disappointed of their sport, the mob clamoured for her re-appearance; but the chamberlain and sergeants protected her, and conveyed her in safety to the Tolzey. The mayor asked her, "Why do you appear in that habit?" She answered, "In obedience to the light of my conscience." "What (said the mayor) if you had been killed by the rude multitude, in your obedience?" She replied, "I am in the hands of Him that ruleth all things. I have harmed none; yet have I been harmed. Neither have I broken any law, by which I can be brought under just censure. If I had appeared in gay clothing, you would not have been troubled." The "*Cry of Blood*,"—(a small 4to. subscribed by Dennis Hollister and others)—adds, "Had Sara Goldsmith appeared in the fantastic dress of this vain and wanton age, or in a spirit of lightness and haughtiness, she had received enough of friendship from this generation: but being,

through the cross to her own will, made obedient, for their sakes, to pass through the city in hair-cloth and ashes, as a testimony against their pride, which never was at that height as at this day, she hath received that hard measure aforementioned." This hard measure was, a committal to Bridewell, with her two companions.

From these details, the candid reader will easily perceive, that *appearances* were certainly such as to induce the suspicions of an enemy; and that, however sincere the parties might be, their conduct was highly extravagant; but still, that there is no absolute evidence of jesuitical intrigue. Jesuits would scarcely have encouraged such prominent and ostentatious demonstrations, but would rather have artfully and insidiously suggested a secret and comparatively quiet insinuation of their principles.

Several other instances of personal abuse and imprisonment, for interruptions in different churches, are recorded about this time; but their striking similarity to those already alluded to, and to each other—(none presenting any remarkable features of spirituality on the one hand, or extraordinary malevolence on the other,)—will fully justify us in thus summarily dismissing them.

The account of Naylor, however, requires more specific notice. Not that we wish to perpetuate his awful delusions, or the worse than fulsome adulations of his followers. Still less would we view them as a specimen of the sentiments and practice of the religious body with which he was undoubtedly in communion. There always were, and still are, occasionally,

eccentric members in every section of the church, especially when first rising into notoriety. But the condemnation of a whole community, for the follies or even the crimes of a few individuals, is utterly repugnant to christian candour. Who, but a reckless, unprincipled partizan, would reproach pious and candid episcopalians, for the licentious enormities of the cavalier clergy of Charles the Second, or even for the double-distilled bigotry of a modern few, who appear to have ransacked the infernal regions for terms sufficiently strong and offensive to express the rancour of their hearts against conscientious protestant dissenters? On the same principle, the man who would unnecessarily blazon the fanaticism of James Naylor, and attach it as a stigma to the Society of Friends, discovers more the malignity of his heart than the obliquity of his judgment. If it be weakness to denounce the man for the sake of the community, it is wickedness to stigmatize the community for the sake of the man. Gough, quoting freely from previous authors, but adding some pertinent observations of his own, while he candidly acknowledges the alleged facts, except those which Naylor himself denied, satisfactorily establishes two important points in extenuation — previous mental aberration, and a subsequent abandonment of his vagaries, in the most humble and comprehensive terms. He also proves that Naylor was not patronized by the *Bristol* Friends, and that he was faithfully remonstrated with and admonished by Fox and other influential parties in that community.

That he was guilty of *blasphemy*, in the scriptural

acceptation of the term, is by no means satisfactorily proved. The blasphemy, if any, was uttered by his followers, who, in our view, were the more culpable party. He did not intentionally dishonour God; but foolishly imagined himself, in some extraordinary manner, to be the subject of the attributes of Deity; and whatever greatness he arrogated, or allowed his followers to ascribe to him, it was not as James Naylor, but as a supposed chosen vehicle of communicating the divine mind. Utterly indefensible as all such phantasies must necessarily be, they do not amount to the grave and serious crime of blasphemy. Besides, if he *were* guilty of blasphemy, what divine sanction have earthly tribunals to inflict punishment? Under a theocracy, when the divine glory was visible, this heinous transgression was punishable with death by the magistracy: but where, under the christian economy, do we find the least shadow of authority for human interference? Were the Pharisees (who were undoubtedly guilty of the highest degree of blasphemy) maimed, and branded, and pilloried, and scourged? Who were the informers? the legislators? the judges? the executioners? the Reverend Divines, who, because their "ghostly admonitions" were disregarded, participated in the cruel infliction? Were they episcopalians? or presbyterians? or independents? In the case of James Naylor, even Seyer is indignant. The Parliament, not being favourites, are condemned; and he justly pronounces the severity of the punishment, a "perpetual disgrace," both to them and to the ministers of religion. These cruelties were certainly more in unison with the tender mercies of a Spanish

Inquisition, than with the mild and benignant spirit of that religion of the interests of which they fancied themselves the exclusive conservators. The glory of the already fading Commonwealth was tarnished, and the stain will never be eradicated. Happily we live in a more enlightened and liberal age, in which depraved human nature is confined within certain limits. Even the Spiritual Courts are at their last gasp. Like the expiring snuff of a candle, they flare with unnatural vigour, in sure and certain anticipation of an early and utter extinction.

In 1656, for the first time, we find the celebrated George Fox at Bristol. He held meetings in a large orchard. At first, they were silent ones; but the silence was soon broken by opposition. The results of his ministry at this time do not appear in detail; but Gough says, "he had large meetings to good effect."

In 1660, he visited the city again; where, finding that the meetings of his friends were greatly disturbed by the military, he desired four of them to wait on the mayor and aldermen, and request the use of the Town-hall, at such times as might not interfere with the meetings of the corporation; and offering, as an acknowledgement, twenty pounds a year, to be given to the poor. His friends were naturally astonished at such a proposition, and said the mayor would think them mad, as he and the military were acting in concert against them. But Fox prevailed with his friends; and when they waited on his worship, they found him moderate beyond all expectation, assuring them that *he* could consent to their proposal, though

he was but one. On their return to Fox, and acquainting him with the result of their application, he desired them also to wait on the Colonel, to complain of the rudeness of his soldiers. Astonished at such a suggestion, they refused to comply with it.

The next morning, (the first day of the week,) a meeting was held as usual, in the orchard, which was very numerously attended. After Fox had been speaking some time, the soldiers, some of whom were intoxicated, came and interrupted them. One had bound himself, to "cut down and kill the man that spoke." But, in pressing through the crowd, he came in contact with the four persons who had waited on the mayor, and began to quarrel with them, and at length he sheathed his sword. The next day these four friends spoke to the Colonel, and when he heard how mischievous his soldiers had been, he not only reproved, but punished them. On this, Fox blamed his friends, thinking that if they had gone to the Colonel, as he wished them, they might have prevented both the outrage and the punishment. For some time, however, the meetings were undisturbed.

During this visit also, he had a meeting at one Edward Pyot's, in the neighbourhood of Bristol, at which the attendance was so numerous, that it was remarked "the city looked naked."

Two years after, Fox came to Bristol again. The mayor's officers disturbed a meeting at which he was present, and conveyed one of the speakers to prison; but Fox immediately succeeded him, and the meeting ended peaceably. This was on a first day of the week. That day week some of his friends endeavoured to

dissuade him from venturing again, as the mayor had called in the train-bands, for the purpose of disturbing the meeting, and capturing the speaker. Fox heard what they had to say, but made no reply; and, very shortly after, he went to the meeting, whither he had sent his friends. Being met on the way by some who were much concerned lest he should be taken, they tried, by every means in their power, to prevent him. "What! (said one,) wilt thou go into the mouth of the beast?" "Wilt thou go into the mouth of the dragon?" said another. But Fox was unmoved, and went on. On arriving at the meeting, he could not but perceive the agitation of his friends, on his account; but so powerful was his preaching, that their fears and apprehensions soon subsided. After the conclusion of his address, and a short prayer, he stood up again, and reminded the people that now they might know there was a God in Israel, who could deliver his servants. The fact is, that the officers and soldiers had hindered more time in breaking up another meeting than they had anticipated, and were greatly enraged at their disappointment in being too late.

The next year, (1663,) Knight entered on the mayoralty, and so intent was he on persecuting the quakers, that it was said, he might have imagined it to be the chief duty of his office. By his directions, the subordinate officers frequently exceeded their own inclinations. By order of Captain Smart, three men, merely for being in their shops on Christmas-day, were tied neck and heels, with heavy weights and muskets about their necks, in extremely cold weather,

till the eyes of two of them were thought to be drawing out, their faces being black, and even their lives endangered. But, just as they were about to expire, some tradesmen cut the cords and released them.

This violence excited the disgust of many of the the respectable citizens, who did not scruple to express their feelings of grief and shame, that so many "sober, peaceable, and substantial persons should be thrust by heaps into prison." There they were so crowded, in the heat of summer, that the health, not only of the prisoners, but of the whole city was endangered. To say nothing of Newgate, Bridewell was so full of prisoners for conscience sake, that fifty-five women had but four or five beds to lie on; and two, both near their confinement, died in consequence of the stench.

On the 29th of the 5th month (July) 1670, some of the Friends thus express themselves:—"We are wholly deprived of our meeting-houses, and do constantly meet in the streets, before the doors, which, every first-day, are guarded with soldiers. . . . . Truth prospers more than before. The presbyterians, independents, and baptists have forsaken their meetings on first-days in the city, and get out into the highways, and there meet, some thousands in a place."

About nine months after, they write again:—"Our meetings here, for the most part, are attended with the informers. But one of them is never likely to come among us more, there being no appearance of life for him. He is in very great horror for what he has done to Friends, and confessed the same to many."

In 1681-2, after several years' comparative peace,

the spirit of persecution again revived; and many zealously employed themselves against the different bodies of professors, without being invested with any legal authority. The most distinguished names in the army of informers were Sheriff Knight, Alderman Ralph Olyffe, and Helliar, an attorney; with their subordinate agents—Lugge, Tilley, Casse, Patrick, Hoare, Watkins, Brand, and Higgins. They began under pretence of levying five pounds on the meeting-houses in St. James's parish, towards defraying the expense of the trained bands; under colour of which, they took the seats, forms, stools, and chairs, breaking many of them, removing some, and burning the remainder. Then, as an entertainment after the tragedy, they encouraged the boys to amuse themselves in breaking the windows.

A few days after, Knight and Helliar attacked them again, threw away the men's hats, and after beating and bruising a poor old man, sent him, by way of compensation, we suppose, to recover in Newgate. They broke down the galleries, and carried away all the partitions. They plundered the dwelling (most likely adjoining) of Elizabeth Batho, a widow, threw out her goods, broke her windows, and, obliging her to quit the house, which she held on lease, put one of their own sort in possession of it.

Shortly after, they took down the names of three hundred and twenty members, and expelled them, took possession of the meeting-house, as they pretended, for the king, carried away the doors, blocked up the door-ways, and left guards to keep possession, who entered by a window.

Having thus secured one meeting-house, they proceeded to make like devastation at the meeting-house in Temple-street. Here, in demolishing the windows and galleries, they acted so outrageously, that they alarmed the neighbours; one of whom, a respectable woman, a member of the established church, wept much, and, in an agony of grief, cried out, "Leave off! leave off! these doings will bring God's plagues upon us!" The damage done was computed at one hundred and fifty pounds. And then, after creating a riot, they had the assurance to charge it on the injured party!

These tyrannical informers were usually attended by a rabble of rude boys, whose natural propensity to mischief they wantonly encouraged, particularly inciting them to abuse the female part of the congregations. Helliar, as a pre-concerted signal to the boys, would call out to the women, "Have a care of your hoods and scarfs!" and immediately, the boys, rushing on them with violence, tore their scarfs, and personally abused them. One of the congregation, a delicate and spirited young person, retaliated; for which Helliar sent her to prison. Indeed, he himself offered the most unmanly insults to these unoffending victims of his tyranny, calling them by the most opprobrious epithets which he, a professed libertine, could possibly conceive. At Temple-street, he detained the men, and drove the women along like so many cattle, occasionally amusing himself with shouting at them, in the cattle-drivers' slang—"P'hrow! P'hrow! P'hrow!"

Individual instances of personal abuse, are so

numerous and so similar, that we think we shall better consult the taste of the reader by a general description of the persecution, (the particulars of which are furnished in a letter, dated the 19th of April, 1682,) than by a minute relation of each particular grievance.

On the previous Lord's-day, Sir John Knight, with Helliar and others, disturbed a meeting, and conveyed several to Bridewell, where they had to remain up all night, for want of the means of resting. The very meanest of the informers assumed more authority than a justice of the peace, committing with more imperiousness, and liberating without any consultation with their superiors. When the parties were taken before the mayor, he asked Sir John what they had done, and why they were committed; and all the answer he could make was, "They were all at a meeting; but said nothing; so I knew not what they were about, unless they were plotting to break open the prison, and get away their husbands."

On the 18th, they were again molested by the gallant Knight and Helliar his squire—the constables being ready, as was agreed upon, in the meeting, with a drummer, several fiddlers, and a flag. Plenty of liquor was provided as a stimulant to revelry and riot. And just as the sheriff made his appearance, the doors were thrown wide open, and the fiddlers gave him a musical salute. Smiling, he asked, "Why, what is the meaning of this?" when Tilly, one of the menial informers, answered, "We meant to be merry, and came here to dance." At this, to make good their pretensions, they immediately selected several young women to dance with them, who timidly clung close

to those more advanced in age, on which some of them, and the women who defended them, were committed to Bridewell by the sheriff, with two others who reproved the fiddlers for their impudence. One woman thus addressed the sheriff himself: "Well, Sheriff Knight, I see that though we cannot be suffered to serve God, these shall to serve the devil. Our peaceable meetings you seek to make riots; and here you yourselves are rioting and revelling to a great excess. These doings are a shame to Bristol, which was once reputed a sober and well governed city. Now it is altered: for the profane, drunkards, revellers, and whoremongers are countenanced: but those that fear God made a prey of. Surely God will visit heavily for these crying sins."

The meeting being dispersed, the invading party still retained possession, and were soon joined by others of similar habits, and continued eating, drinking, and revelling to a late hour. Before they left, they went to the top of an adjoining house, and celebrated their triumph in vociferous shouts and clamour. Then, *to show their power*, they actually went to Bridewell, and liberated the women!

The parents being for the most part in prison, the meetings were continued by the children. Their regularity, gravity, and composure appear to have been admirable; and their constancy and manly courage, with their exemplary patience under abuses, far exceeded their years. Their age exempted them from the lash of the law; but not from the assaults of the informers. The sheep being absent, the lambs were considered an easy prey. Frequently, they were con-

fined in the stocks, and beaten unmercifully with twisted whalebone sticks. One day, Helliar sent eleven boys and four girls to Bridewell; and the next day, being brought before the mayor, they were both flattered and threatened, to induce them to refrain from meeting for worship, but to their credit they were immovable. To terrify them, Helliar ordered the keeper to procure a new cat-o'-nine-tails, but he could not obtain from the justices the desired permission to use it.

So many were imprisoned, that the jails were literally crammed; and the prisoners were thurst into dark and filthy dungeons, in which it was scarcely possible to breathe. One of the aldermen declared, that if he had a dog to which he was attached, he would not put it there. When they complained for want of room, the jailor replied, "If I can but shut the door, it will be well enough."

For some time, the prisoners kept a particular account of their treatment, which they published under the title of "*A Narrative of the Cruelties and Abuses acted by Isaac Dennis, Keeper, his Wife and Servants, in the Prison of Newgate, in the City of Bristol, upon the People of the Lord in scorn called Quakers.*"

Attempting to throw a prisoner down the stairs, and calling him an excommunicated rogue, Dennis swore he would break his neck. On being remonstrated with, he added, "If I had killed him, I should never be called to account about him." Some of the prisoners desiring to work for their subsistence, were denied that privilege; and if they desired to meet

for religious worship, they were derided and separated, being confined in some of the filthiest rooms in the place.

To those who were taken sick, Dennis behaved with great inhumanity, refusing even the use of fire for which a friend had paid; and one, notwithstanding the order of the sheriff to the contrary, was compelled to endure the oaths and blasphemies of swearers and drunkards, even in the article of death. One Richard Lindy, a blind man, nearly ninety years of age, was compelled to sit up three nights in a chair, although a friend would have paid for better accommodation. Three died of the spotted fever, Dennis pretending to consent to their removal, but secretly instigating the magistrates to refuse to listen to the requests of their friends. His wife and the under keeper emulated him in insolent barbarity, not only to the men, but to the women; calling them opprobrious names, and seriously injuring their persons.

But a heavy trial awaited the jailor himself. Being taken seriously ill, he endured great anguish of mind. Then he wished he had never seen the inside of the jail, and desired some of those whose religious worship he had disturbed to pray for him, and to forgive him for what he had done. They replied, that *they* forgave him, but he should ask forgiveness of God. Still, his anguish increased; and when orders were given that he should be bled, he said, "none of their prescriptions would do him any good—his distemper being another thing—his day was over; and there was no hope of mercy from God for him." Some of the

prisoners, compassionating his pitiable condition, intimated their desire, "if it were the will of the Lord, that he might find a place of repentance;" and that "they hoped his day was not over, seeing he had such a full sense of his condition." He answered, "I thank you for your good hope; but I have no faith—faith is the gift of God." And whatever consolations were presented to him, his melancholy response was—"My day is over—there is no mercy for me!" Such is the gnawing worm of a guilty conscience. Whether or not he found mercy, must be left to that day when all secrets will be revealed; but after languishing about a month, in this miserable, wretched state of mind, he died, without affording any visible evidence of peace with God.

The publishers of this account, thus conclude their narrative:—"This is not made public, the Lord knows, out of revenge to the persons concerned, but as a warning to all. Neither is it of any self-boasting, as though by our own ability we had undergone all these cruelties inflicted on us; but to Him that lives for evermore do we ascribe the glory. By his power alone we have been supported. And if this example of God's judgments on this man shall stop any from their evil courses, we have our end."

The following epistles are quite refreshing—they are addressed to the Yearly Meetings in London, in 1664 and 1665, and display, more than any thing we have seen, the christian feeling and deportment of the persecuted Friends, under their accumulated and protracted sufferings.

Bristol, Newgate, 17th third month, 1674.

Dear friends,

In regard the time is near when Friends from most parts may be together, we thought it might not be unwelcome that you hear from us also.

The Friends who have been long prisoners in Bridewell, for not answering by money the keeper's demands, they being his prisoners, though kept there, he did, on the 2d instant, remove them hither; so that the number of prisoners in this gaol is above one hundred, and are so crowded for lodging, in close, dark, damp, and dungeon-like holes; and many in one place called *Paul's*, where never any before was put to lodge, that ever we know or heard of. We say these things cry aloud; but many hearts are hard, and those who might remedy will not hear, or at least not regard. None can plead ignorance who are any way concerned to help the oppressed; since Friends and truth are fully cleared, so far as we have been able in letting them understand. And many are so void of compassion as to impute it wholly to our faults: and some do account we are used too well. These things we mention, rather to inform Friends how we are, than to complain. Indeed, God hath been so good to us, and still is so, that it doth out-balance all these light afflictions. He hath given health, and also preserved the same, in several appearances of very great danger, which mercy is even to a wonder. He hath given comfort, content, unity, peace, and love amongst us greatly; and, by his fatherly care, hath so provided always for us, that we have had no want. For all which mercies we desire you with us to praise the Lord, and to pray unto him for us here, that God would for ever keep us in faithfulness to him, that we may become even as monuments of his mercy; that He who alone is worthy, who is all, and doth all, may have all the honour, praise, and renown, now, henceforth, and for ever.

Within this week, we are pulled and haled out, and not suffered to meet together, as hath been formerly allowed us to do: nay, they will not suffer it, though

all in one and the same gaol: the keeper saith he hath orders for it from his masters: and so we were thrust and locked up into several places. But in these things they have no conquest nor glory, thus to oppress the innocent, even in their prison, where they have thus thrust us in heaps. But in this is our rejoicing, that they cannot keep God from us, by whose power we are kept in patience to suffer these things from the hands of men, to whom we never did any harm, to whom God grant repentance before his anger break forth into an overflowing scourge, and there be no remedy: even so be it, if the Lord will. Blessed be God we are well; and our love is dearly to all our truly beloved friends in the holy truth of God, whose lives, liberty, and peace we pray God to preserve. In your approaches to the throne of grace, forget not us: that is the greatest good we can do to each other, who have none in heaven but the Lord, nor desire any on earth but him only. Our wives' love is dearly to you all, and the loves of many more here, in whose names we salute you, and shall rejoice to hear from you of the glory of the Lord, and the prosperity of his holy, innocent, peaceable, and everlasting truth. Amen. In truth of love we remain your friends,

CHARLES HARFORD,
RICHARD SNEAD,
CHARLES JONES.

Bristol, Newgate, fourth month, 1685.

Dear friends and brethren,

This being a season wherein you may be glad, as well as desirous to see, or at least to hear from one another as fellow members of that living body of which Jesus Christ is the head, we thought it not unreasonable that you might hear from us, who, though still in bonds, yet in good satisfaction, knowing that affliction is that in which all the righteous, in all ages, ever pass to God's heavenly kingdom: and who are faithful, walking in this true, right way even to their lives' end, may thereby have a token from the Lord that they are not bastards, but

sons: because every son whom he loveth he doth rebuke and chasten; which God intends for our good, that we may learn never to stray from him who is the Rock of Ages and the Foundation of the righteous in all and every age: the Fountain of all goodness, and the Life of all things; without whom we can do nothing, and by whom we may be able to do all things. This is our God; and as we have waited on him, he hath suffered us to want no good thing; neither hath any thing seemed hard to us, insomuch that we can truly say, to God's glory only, It is manifold better to suffer with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of this sinful world. Those endure but for a season; but this worketh, to the faithful, an eternal weight of glory, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can man's heart think what God hath laid up in his Son Christ Jesus, for those who in patience continue through the day of trial, which God bringeth on the earth, to try all the inhabitants thereof, that all works may be known, of what sort it is.

"Dear friends! In your approaches to the Lord, pray to him for us. Oh, let us watch and pray, and that continually, one for another, that God would keep us faithful, by his divine grace, to serve him, in meekness, holy fear, and innocency, unto our lives end. This hath been the hope and end of our calling from the dark ways in the world, to the marvellous light of Christ Jesus, which hath shined in our hearts, through which we have seen the way of life, and know Him who is the truth, and there is not another. God enable us to love him above all, and to cleave to him through the loss of all. We are but worms, and of no might; and have none in heaven but him alone, nor can desire any—no, not in all the earth nor earthly things—but he only. He hath helped us, and doth, and so ever must do, or else we shall fail; but God will never fail those who truly rely and depend upon him, to the end.

Praise God with us, for his wonderful goodness in preserving our health—a work to a wonder: (oh that we ever may be thankful for it!) and also that he has

thus made us worthy to suffer for his name's sake only. We are not quite an hundred, are well, and in good content, peace, and love, and want nothing. We pray God keep you, and crown your assemblies with his ancient glory. Amen.

We and our wives have our dear loves remembered to you all, with the rest here. We subscribe, for ourselves and the rest,

Your faithful friends and brethren,

RICHARD SNEAD,
CHARLES HARFORD,
CHARLES JONES,
PAUL MOON.

We have only to add, that these patient sufferers continued in prison until the proclamation of a free pardon by James the Second, in which was a special warrant for comprehending the quakers. Then they were liberated, and their persecutions for religious worship altogether ceased. "Being thus delivered (says Besse) from the hands of those who sought their destruction, they enjoyed the freedom of their religious assemblies, and an enlargement of heart therein to praise the name of the Lord for his mercy manifested in so signal a deliverance."

The trials of the Friends being thus brought to a happy termination, a natural inquiry presents itself—What became of their persecutors? We presume not to lift the veil of the invisible world; but a glance at their end may not be uninstructive. *Dennis* we have already seen in the agonies of bitter remorse. *Helliar* finished his wretched course under the upraidings of a guilty conscience. *Olyffe* expired lamenting the utter impossibility of repairing the injuries he had inflicted. And *Sir John Knight*, after abusing James

for repealing the penal laws, turned with the tide in favour of William; then he joined the malecontents in that mild and benignant reign, and for some political offence was imprisoned in Newgate—that Newgate to which he had previously consigned so many for conscience' sake; and after his release, he lived for a short time in unhonoured obscurity, in a neighbouring village, and died unblest and unlamented. Doubtless, all these worthies, no less than the persecuting bishop and his obsequious clergy, were interred "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life;" but, buried or not in consecrated earth,—"*the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death.*"

BRISTOL:

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